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STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE

On The Cover

Original art of Boba Fett battling Han Solo and Chewbacca, by Ken Steacy

Rebel Report

Message from the editor

Around The Galaxy

News and information about STAR WARS stuff... plus free "Galaxy Giveaways"

New Visions Artist: Ken Steacy

This gifted illustrator — and contributor to Topps' Galaxy card series — talks about his passion for art and STAR WARS

West End Games Presents: Taggor Bren

Meet this dangerous bounty hunter... and learn about STAR WARS roleplaying games

Bantam Book Excerpt: The Crystal Star

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Every once in a while, a genuine social phenomenon occurs. Not a fad or a trend, like disco music, the grunge look or *Roseanne*. But a truly unusual, exceptional, radical, meaningful event that has a major impact on millions of people's lives. The Beatles, the Vietnam War and Woodstock (the original) are a few examples of defining moments of the last three decades.

STAR WARS is right there, too.

What's phenomenal about *STAR WARS*? The heroic characters, the uplifting adventure story, the fascinating alien places and beings, and the breathtaking special effects certainly are part of it. But to me the most incredible thing about *STAR WARS* is right here in your hands. Not to say that this brand-new magazine itself is incredible, although everyone involved is very proud of it. The fact that it even exists is what really blows my mind.

Those last three words should tip you off that I'm old enough to have actually used that expression when it was popular in the sixties, and to have been on hand when *STAR WARS* first hit theaters in May of 1977. I'm showing my age by recycling sixties phrases. But by recalling the debut of *STAR WARS*, I'm showing the long-lasting impact of George Lucas' science fiction saga.

A New Adventure Begins

After 17 years, *STAR WARS* remains a phenomenon. Whether you're 41 or 14 or 4, it's still a great movie. And so are the two sequels. Fans of all three continue to relive the films' fantastic scenes, to recite the dialogue, to relish in the exploits of Luke, Han and Leia, and to debate the essence of the Force.

STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE, however, is not just about nostalgia. Because *STAR WARS* is not just about what was. It's about what *still is* and what *will be* as the adventure continues.

This magazine is not going to just rehash what has already been said and written about *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. It is going to explore the many new and exciting ways in which those movies, their characters, their spaceships and their strange worlds are very much alive today.

What you'll find in this magazine—which will be published for Lucasfilm Ltd. by The Topps Company four times a year—is all the news and information throughout the entire *STAR WARS* Galaxy. The articles, interviews and regular columns will take a fresh new look at the memorable people, places and things of the trilogy. They also will keep you informed about the many new *STAR WARS* products, being produced by dozens of companies worldwide, including books, comics, art, trading cards, video and computer games, roleplaying games, toys and collectibles. And our readers will be among the first to get information about Lucasfilm's new projects, such as the re-release of the original *STAR WARS* and the completely new movie (see page 6).

No magazine can succeed without knowing its readers and giving them what they want. Let us know what you like, or dislike, about this premier issue. What do you want in future issues? Who do you want to read about? You can write us letters and postcards, and because we're dedicated to the future, you can find us in cyberspace, too. You can reach us at our America Online address, SWGMOTOPPS (if you're on another service, type SWGMOTOPPS@aol.com), or through CompuServe's "Comics Publishers Forum" by typing GO TOPPS. In the next issue—coming in January—we'll have news about where else to find *STAR WARS GALAXY* on-line.

Until then, may the Force be with you...

Bob Woods

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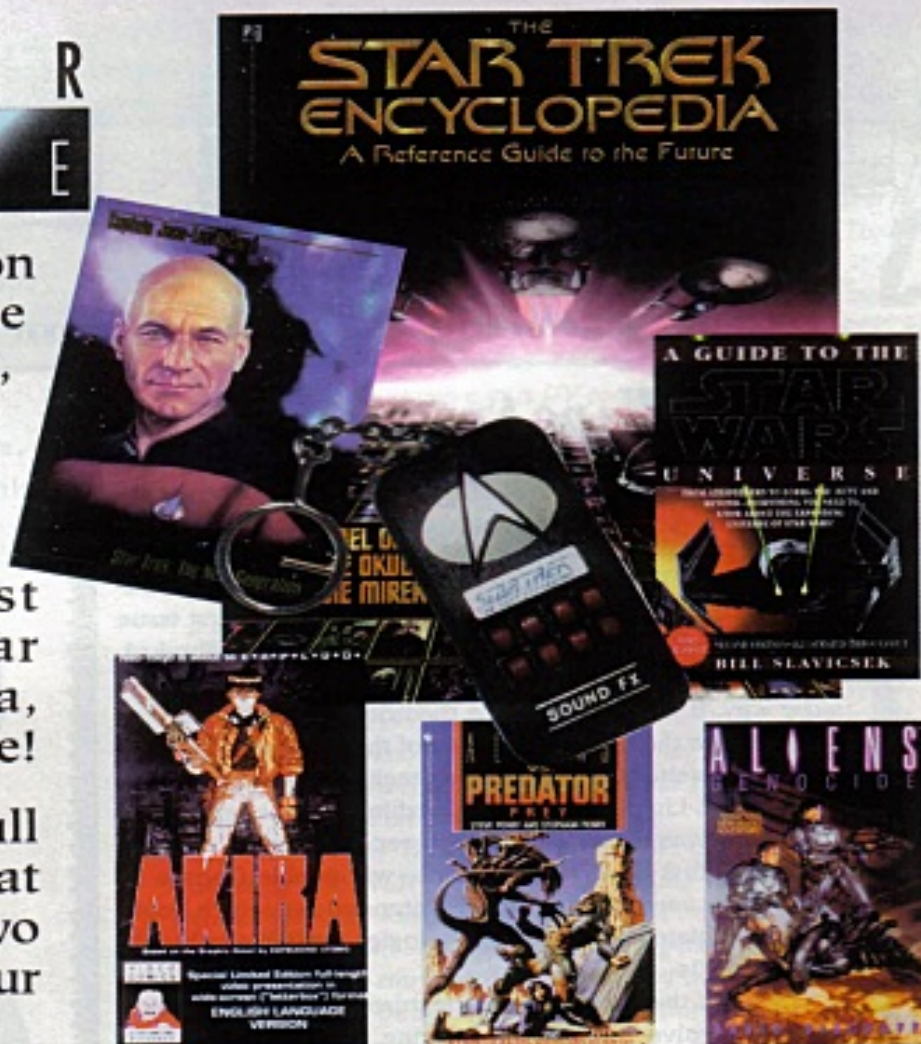
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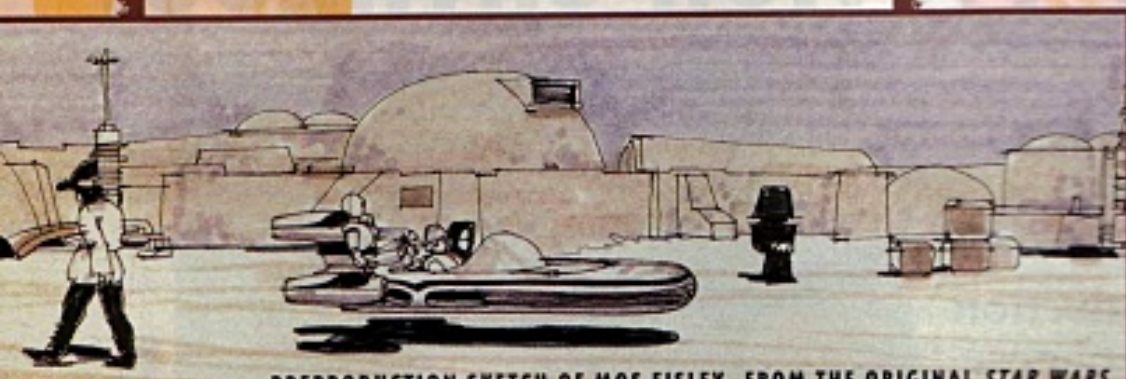
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AROUND THE GALAXY

INSIDE NEWS FROM LUCASFILM



PREPRODUCTION SKETCH OF MOS EISLEY, FROM THE ORIGINAL *STAR WARS*

STAR WARS SPECIAL EDITION IS A "GO"

For months the buzz inside, and outside, Hollywood has been that George Lucas is secretly at work on an expanded version of the original *STAR WARS*. As the first issue of *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE* goes to press, Lucasfilm Ltd. has confirmed that indeed the *STAR WARS* Special Edition is under way. It is scheduled for a theatrical release in 1997 to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the film's debut.

The advent of digital imaging technology as pioneered by Industrial Light & Magic—Lucasfilm's special effects division that was employed in such recent films as *Jurassic Park*, *The Mask* and *Forrest Gump*—will enable George to produce the version he originally intended but which could not be completed using the technologies available to him in the mid-1970s.

Most of the enhancements featured in the Special Edition will involve Mos Eisley, offering a never-before-seen articulation of background creatures who inhabit that "wretched hive of scum and villainy" (as Obi-Wan described Tatooine's spaceport city to Luke in *STAR WARS*). Also look for a scene in which Han confronts Jabba the Hutt—filmed in 1976 but not included in the original film. Topping things off will be a new sound mix that takes advantage of today's digital sound formats. Theatrical distribution of the Special Edition will be handled by the original distributor of *STAR WARS*, Twentieth Century-Fox.

Following the Special Edition in 1997, Lucasfilm plans to release the first of the all-new *STAR WARS* trilogy movies in 1998. Watch for more details on these late-breaking developments in future issues of *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE*.

ROLE MODELS

When it comes to models representing the forces of good and evil, the characters in the *STAR WARS* trilogy are perfect examples. For several years, Screamin' Products has produced exact replicas of several of them in model kits, including Yoda and Darth Vader. This fall, Boba Fett becomes the ninth member of





BIGGER, WIDER, BETTER VIEWS

the Screamin' cast. (A preproduction prototype is shown here.) When assembled, the 18" vinyl model of the notorious bounty hunter includes his rocket pack, cape and all of his weaponry. Sculpted by Chris Lynch, the kit features superb detailing on all of Fett's nifty hardware. In fact, the folks at Screamin' are quietly saying that this is their most striking kit yet. Score one for the dark side.



Considering that the original *STAR WARS* was one of the biggest film hits of all time, it's only fitting that the 1977 movie now is the subject of the biggest trading cards of all time. Beginning in early 1995, Topps will launch the premiere edition of its spectacular new *STAR WARS* Widevision cards based on George Lucas' groundbreaking opus. Each full-color, super-premium card measures an amazing 2 1/2" x 4 3/4"—that's almost twice as wide as most trading cards—includes a hologram stamp and is UV coated on both sides.

With all that space, you'd expect something special, and you get it. Using an exclusive new process developed in conjunction with Lucasfilm Ltd. and Telecine Research Center, Topps has digitally mastered actual scenes directly from the movie, which was filmed in the wide 35-mm scope format instead of the more standard 35-mm flat format. "Just as an original film is mastered for a laser disc or home video, we have found a technical process to master films for trading cards," say Greg Goldstein, Topps' director of publishing. "The results are an absolute revelation."

These are not publicity stills or shots taken on the sets. They are remarkable reproductions of what you saw on the big screen. That means fans can enjoy special effects footage never before available on a card.

All of *STAR WARS*' major plot scenes are presented in the series of 120 Widevision cards, including the capture of the Rebel Blockade Runner by Darth Vader's Imperial starship, the cantina scene and its bizarre aliens, dogfights between TIE fighters and X-wing starfighters and the Rebel attack on the Death Star. The card backs show preproduction storyboards and behind-the-scenes photos, along with insider's notes.

Foil packs containing eight Widevision cards each will be available for a suggested retail price of \$1.89 at comic and other specialty outlets. Look for a second series of *STAR WARS* Widevision cards from Topps next year.

GALAXY GIVEAWAY

***STAR WARS* GALAXY MAGAZINE and Topps are giving away 12 boxes (24 packs per box) of the new *STAR WARS* Widevision cards.**

To enter the random drawing, send your name, age and address in a letter or on a postcard to Widevision Giveaway, *STAR WARS* GALAXY MAGAZINE, One Whitehall St., New York, NY 10006. Entries must be received by January 31, 1995. Winners will be notified by mail.

WHERE IS HE NOW?



MARK HAMILL: Still a Force

Since filming *Return of the Jedi* more than a decade ago, actor Mark Hamill, who portrayed Luke Skywalker in all three *STAR WARS* films, has worked on a number of projects. His latest is a high-tech adventure in a science fiction world where a hero like Mark more than fills the bill.

He'll star late this fall in *Wing Commander III: Heart of the Tiger*, the latest installment in a CD-ROM series from Origin Systems. In this two-hour "interactive movie," Hamill portrays Col. Christopher Blair, an Earth pilot whose actions against the invading Kllrathi you control through the magic of computer technology. You interact with other characters and fly seat-of-the-pants missions in starfighters. Ultimately, you must decide whether Col. Blair will volunteer for a dangerous, yet Earth-saving mission. Because there are different scenarios, Hamill had to act out several variations of every scene.

Two of Hamill's other big projects call on him to be heard rather than seen. He's in his third season as the voice of the Joker on Fox TV's animated *Adventures of Batman and Robin*. Cackling and laughing demonically with Mark's vocal assistance, the evil green dude is just as wild and crazy as he is in the theatrical movie and in the comic books.

Hamill's other voice-over character is in the new *Phantom 2040* cartoon series from Hearst Animation. Hamill speaks the words of Dr. Jak, a roving video reporter in Metropla, a city of the future. Jak films and follows the Phantom, a superhero based on a long-running comic strip. In 2040, as the Phantom fights evil, Dr. Jak is there to blare news of his exploits to the world.

DR. JAK

THE JOKER



HAMILL AS COL. BLAIR IN *WING COMMANDER III*

HIS "VOICE" LIVES ON

When George Lucas made the *Star Wars* films, he had to find a way to create the alien yells, wails and growls emitted from Chewbacca, the *Millennium Falcon*'s big, hairy co-pilot. Because the Skywalker Sound crew could hardly zip off to Chewie's home planet, Kashyyyk, to record Wookiee dialogue, they turned to a group of big, hairy creatures from Earth—bears—to perform the sounds. On a sad note, the most



notable of those "voice-overs," Tarik, died in August. At 16, Tarik, whose voice was Chewbacca's in *The Empire Strikes Back*, had long entertained visitors to San Jose's Happy Hollow Zoo. Thanks to Chewie, he's still entertaining.

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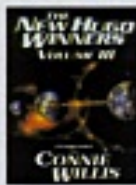
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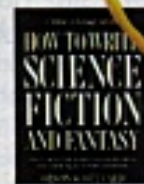
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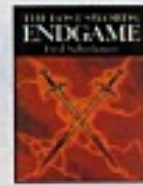
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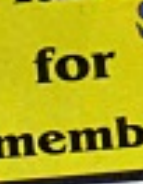
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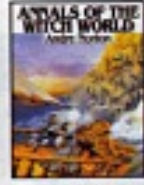
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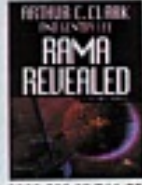
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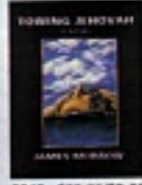
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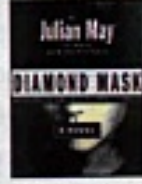
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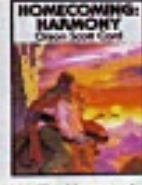
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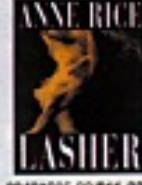
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NOT For Bicycle Spokes

Cardboard trading cards are neat, but this is the '90s. We need something weightier, something more techno. With its second set of *STAR WARS* metal collectors' cards, Metallic Impressions gives fans just that. Each of the 20 cards in *The Empire Strikes Back* set combines the heft of metal with the down-to-earth graphics and text familiar to space fans. An embossed collectors' tin is available to store and protect the set.



Kenner Brings Characters Together

Imagine Luke Skywalker, Darth Vader, Chewbacca, C-3PO and other *Star Wars* characters shrunk down

super-realism, each tiny detail of every character is as exact as Kenner can make it, from Vader's mask to



to the height of a computer disk. That's about the size of the die-cast metal action figures coming in January from Kenner Toys. With

Chewie's belts to R2-D2's lights. Even cooler is the way the figures can be linked together to create scenes. The set includes Luke, Darth, Han, Boba Fett, Chewie and a stormtrooper.

HOT PLATE

Over the last few years, commemorative plate collecting has boomed.

The Hamilton Collection

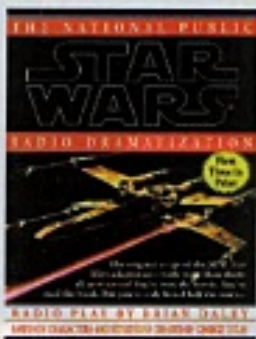
now lets *STAR WARS* fans get in on the fun with its new *Millennium Falcon* plate. It depicts Han Solo maneuvering the ship into an asteroid



STAR WORDS

Ballantine Books' Del Rey long line of *STAR WARS* books continues to be one of the hottest properties in publishing. This fall, Del Rey will publish its latest *STAR WARS* tome, a compilation of Brian Daley's scripts written for *Star Wars: The National Public Radio Dramatization*. Fans who enjoyed the 13-part radio drama, which originally aired in 1980 and was repeated in 1993, can relive the experience; others will enjoy it for the first time. Presented in script form, the book is a unique way to follow the story of the demise of the Death Star and the birth of a new hero, Luke Skywalker.

Del Rey also is reissuing several previously published *STAR WARS* titles before year's end. Three books in each of "The Art of *STAR WARS*" and "Classic *STAR WARS*" series are being published with all-new cover art. Titles in both series are *A New Hope* (originally *Star Wars: From the Adventures of Luke Skywalker*), *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. Also being reissued is a 3-in-1 edition containing the complete *STAR WARS* trilogy.



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Darth
Vader
(Bishop)



Obi-Wan
Kenobi
and Yoda
(King)

Pieces shown actual size.

the Danbury Mint

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916EXG1

GALAXY ART BOOK: THE SEQUEL

The graphic imaginations that inspired Series 2 of Topps' *STAR WARS* Galaxy trading cards have—as were those in Series 1—been gathered together into one awesome book. *The Art of STAR WARS Galaxy, Volume Two* will be published in November showcasing not only 9" x 12" reproductions of many of the 135 Series 2 cards, including all 70 "New Visions" pieces, but never-before-seen creature designs, costume and poster concepts, and promotional and merchandising photos and art, too.

The trade paperback also will include *STAR WARS* illustrations created for such magazines as *Time* and *Reader's Digest*, political cartoons with a *STAR WARS* theme and rarely seen *STAR WARS* artifacts. Plus, there's a section on *STAR WARS* comic book art from both Marvel and Dark Horse.

Boris Vallejo created the cover art and Ralph McQuarrie wrote the forward. The book is now available for \$19.95 at comic shops and major bookstores nationwide.



SEEING IS BELIEVING

Magic Eye books, posters and cards are eye-popping optical illusions. They are computer-generated graphics that at first look like an explosion

at a paint factory. But slowly, if you focus just right, a 3-D image leaps out of the background. Introduced in Japan, the Magic

Eye phenomenon is everywhere, now including the world of *STAR WARS* as Andrews & McMeel has published the 1995 *STAR WARS* 3-D Calendar. It features 12 Magic Eye *STAR WARS* characters or scenes, including... well, you'll have to see for yourself. And don't worry—the dates are printed in type everyone can decipher.

GALAXY GIVEAWAY

STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE and Topps are giving away five Galaxy prizes, each including a copy of the new book, *The Art of STAR WARS Galaxy, Volume Two* and a complete limited-edition set of Series 2 Galaxy trading cards packaged in a collectible tin.

To enter the random drawing, send your name, age and address in a letter or on a postcard to Book Giveaway, *STAR WARS* GALAXY MAGAZINE, One Whitehall St., New York, NY 10004. Entries must be received by January 31, 1995. Winners will be notified by mail.

Bullet-"tin"! Series 2 Complete Sets

Series 2 of Topps' *STAR WARS* Galaxy cards is being offered in limited-edition, complete sets packaged in collectible tins. Only 7,500 of the unique sets are available, at \$99.95 each, primarily at comic shops. Adding to their collectibility, the cards have been foil-stamped; those in the regular series were not. Other bonuses in the set: A hologram of Boris Vallejo's art; an exclusive promo card previewing Topps' new *STAR WARS* Widevision series; dazzling new versions of the six chase cards from Series 2; and a sneak peek at art from *STAR WARS* Galaxy Series 3.



They'll Bend Over Backwards for You

Now you can have the whole *STAR WARS* gang hanging around your house with Just Toys' Bend-Ems, 3"-5" poseable, bendable, twistable figures. All the Rebel Alliance heroes are in the 20-figure set—including Luke, Leia, Han, Obi-Wan, Yoda and Chewie—as well as Empire villains such as Darth Vader, the Emperor and a stormtrooper. New for 1994 are Lando Calrissian, Boba Fett, an Imperial Royal Guard and a Tusken Raider, plus a giant Darth Vader carrying-case helmet.



METAL COLLECTOR'S CARDS

STAR WARS

A NEW HOPE

Now, relive the epic Star Wars adventure with metal collector's cards only from Metallic Impressions, Inc. Twenty all new cards depict the eternal struggle of good versus evil as Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia and the Rebel Alliance battle Darth Vader and the Empire's deadliest weapon yet—the Death Star. The gorgeous collector's tin that houses and protects these cards is as much a keepsake as the cards themselves. The unique combination of durable metal, limited production (only 49,900 sets worldwide), fascinating narrative, and spectacular graphics and photos makes *Star Wars: A New Hope* one of the most fantastic collector's items ever! Use the order form below or call us toll-free...1-800-455-2232!

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THE AWESOME ADVENTURES OF KEN STEACY

He's a high-flying

"New Visions"

artist with an avi-

ation background

and far-out views

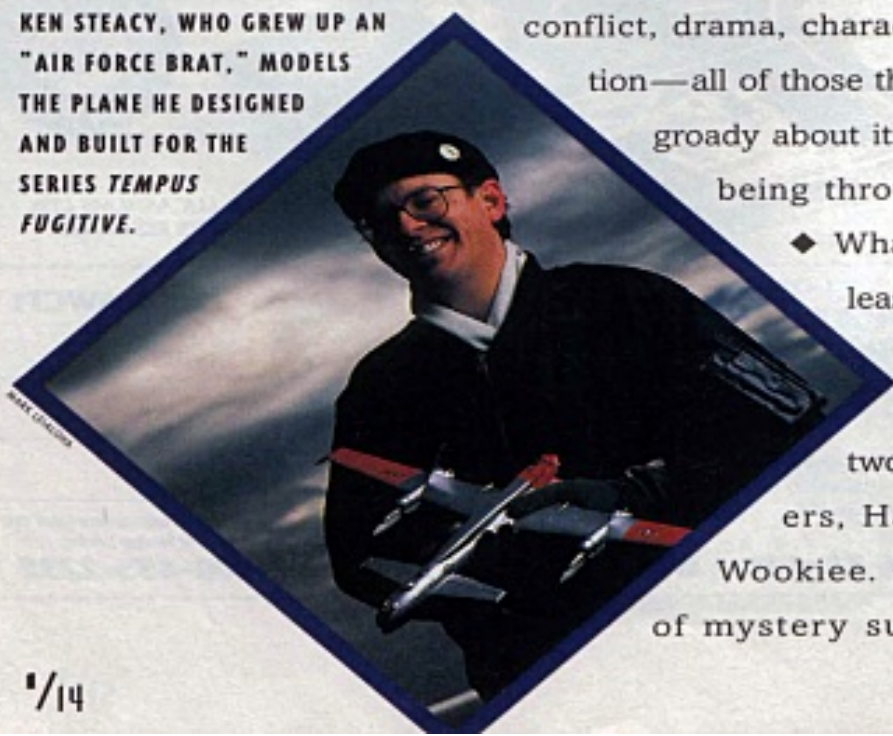
of *STAR WARS*,

science fiction and

other fantasies.

BY GARY GERANI

KEN STEACY, WHO GREW UP AN "AIR FORCE BRAT," MODELS THE PLANE HE DESIGNED AND BUILT FOR THE SERIES *TEMPUS FUGITIVE*.



"BOBA FETT is...a very sexy character," observes Ken Steacy as he evaluates the key dramatic elements of his latest painting. That painting is a never-before-seen piece specially commissioned for the cover of this magazine.

◆ Of course, Ken is no stranger to George Lucas' fanciful cosmos. The 39-year-old artist/writer previously rendered both the display box and poster artwork for Topps' original *STAR WARS* Galaxy card series (*right*). In the series itself, Ken showed the world what a "womp rat"—those carnivorous rodents Luke Skywalker used to hunt in Beggar's Canyon—looks like, on a memorable "New Visions" card. ◆ "The appeal of *STAR WARS* is very much like the appeal of Disney," Steacy explains. "It's something you can share with your family without feeling guilty. You can have action, adventure,

conflict, drama, character development and interaction—all of those things—and you don't have to be groady about it. You don't have to show people being throttled with their own entrails."

◆ What Steacy *did* have to show, at least for our cover illustration, was a spectacular skirmish between bounty hunter Boba Fett and two of our favorite space adventurers, Han Solo and Chewbacca the Wookiee. ◆ "There's a real good aura of mystery surrounding Boba Fett," says



Ken's Art Technique

Steady starts an art project by first executing a series of thumbnails in his trusty sketchbook. He picks a "winner," then redraws it on bond paper at full size (13" x 18") with Col-erase pencils.

That image is either "lightbox" directly onto Strathmore two-ply, hot-press bristol, as with his Darth Vader poster for Topps. For our cover art, Ken traced backward onto drafting vellum and then transferred it onto gessoed Crescent illustration board, to which he applied textures.

Next, the drawing was tightened and values were added with pencil. Some areas are masked off with tape and liquid frisket and broad areas of color (Badger air-opaque acrylics and Pelikan inks) are then laid in with

Ken. "Speculation is rampant.... Is he a clone of Anakin Skywalker? Why is the design of his helmet so similar to Vader's? Is that armored outfit of his something left over from the Clone Wars? The only thing we know for sure is that he had the coolest-looking starship of all the *STAR WARS* characters. And what a cool name—*Slave I*."

Although Fett is clearly the focus of Steady's painting—Boba's large, helmeted head ghosted into the background ties all the visual elements together—he must share the spotlight with his equally dramatic opponents.

"Most of my illustrations tell a story; they capture a moment or perhaps a few moments in time," the artist explains. "For example, one of

Boba's smart darts has obviously malfunctioned. Will the bounty hunter escape? Han, meantime, has had his sidearm shot out of his hand. Will he go for his blaster?"

While Ken's "story" is certainly about a tense confrontation, it's also an opportunity to learn a bit more about Han and Chewie by examining and evaluating their expressions, even their body language. "Han Solo's no whiner," says Steady. "He's cocky and ever-confident, a guy who's survived by using his wits. Even in the midst of momentary defeat, he's always thinking ahead. In this illustration, his expression seems to be saying, 'You've won this moment, Fett, but the next moment is going to be mine,' rather than, 'Oops!'





an Iwata HP-B airbrush. Various hard and soft masks are also used at this stage.

Shadows, highlights and details are added with acrylics (applied with synthetic sable brushes) and prisma-color pencils, and hot spots are nailed in with the airbrush.

Finally, he's done! His very last step is to call FedEx to rush his finished art off to the publisher.

Steacy's advice to aspiring creators: "Learn how to write, pencil, ink, letter, color, etc.—and how to have fun doing it. Don't specialize; that's for insects! Try it, it's fun and easy!"

"As for Chewbacca, you never get to see him looking especially dynamic in any of the films. I wanted to make him a bit more active, kinetic, aggressive. Why Chewie has such revved-up antagonism toward Fett is understandable, given all the Wookiee scalps on the bounty hunter's belt."

Long before George Lucas invented Wookiees and intergalactic bounty hunters, a well-traveled Royal Canadian Air Force brat named Ken Steacy, the son of a veteran aviator and student of 17 different schools, was traveling to other worlds via his fertile imagination. He grew up a comic book fanatic and began drawing at an early age.

By the time he was 11, Ken already knew he would someday become a professional comic

book artist. "I was a Silver Age Marvel maniac," he confesses, "I never read DC comics until Jack Kirby went over there." Other early influences were the British *Dan Dare* and *Thunderbirds* comic magazines during the mid-1960s, which, unlike U.S. comics, were sumptuously painted.

"I've always been drawn to dynamic, hyper-kinetic, fully painted artwork," Ken states. "Vibrant color is an obsession of mine."

Steacy launched his professional career in the late '70s by creating an avalanche of comic-styled illustrations for *Star*Reach* magazine. He quickly gained critical raves, especially for his skilled airbrushing techniques (see box above).

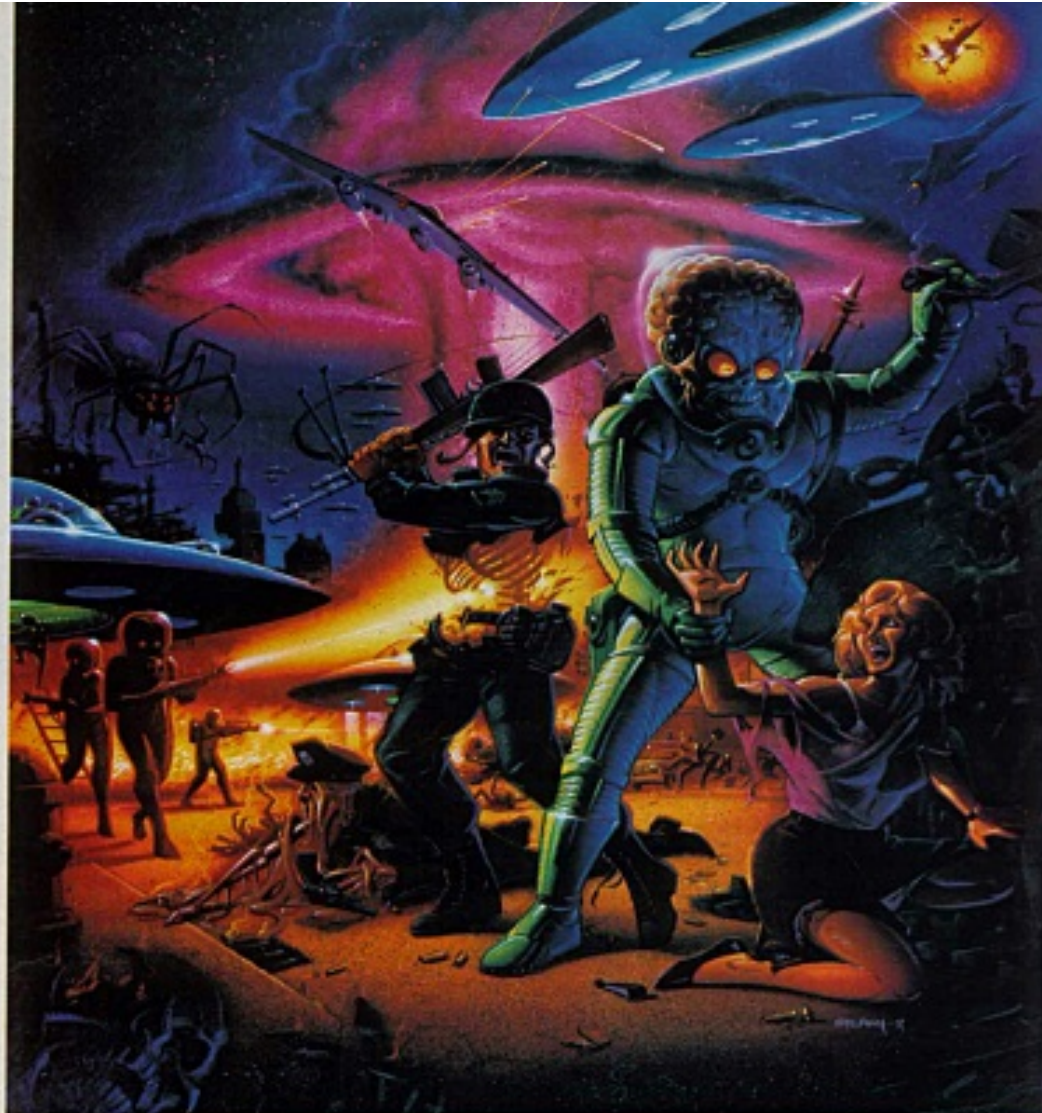
At the same time, Ken was studying film and



LEFT: THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN BLACK-AND-WHITE BY STAR*REACH MAGAZINE.

RIGHT: MEGAPOWERS DEMYSTIFIED SUPERHEROICS WITH HUMOR AND HARD PHYSICS.





THE HEROINE IN KEN'S POSTER ART FOR THE REISSUE OF TOPPS' *MARS ATTACKS* CARDS IS MODELED AFTER HIS WIFE, IOAN.

BRUCE JONES' STORY, A TONGUE-IN-CHEEK HOMAGE TO *MARS ATTACKS* CARDS, APPEARED IN *ALIEN WORLDS*.

video, first at Sheridan College in Oregon and later at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto. He graduated with numerous honors.

Steacy then turned the tables, becoming an art teacher himself, at the University of Toronto, of such exotic courses as "Quick and Dirty Airbrush Technique" and "Dissimilar Media Interface Strategies."

That was not Ken's only departure from the strictly fantasy and action-adventure realms. Because he grew up around military aircraft, aviation was another obsession. During his teaching days, Ken produced a series of paintings depicting the peace-time activities of Canadian military airmen. The renderings are now part of the permanent collection of the National War Museum of Ottawa.

Yet the comics field was a stronger force. It was, after all, Ken's destiny since childhood, and he pursued the genre with his airbrush blazing. He became a regular with *Epic* magazine and various Pacific publications. He went on to paint "zillions" of covers for all the major comics publishers, estimating now that he's illustrated just about every popular character in the comic book pantheon.

Ken's skills have also been showcased in four critically acclaimed graphic novels—*The Sacred and the Profane* (co-authored by Dean Motter), *Night and the Enemy* (written by Har-



lan Ellison), *Megapowers* (written by physicist Jack Weyland) and *Tempus Fugitive*. Ken earned the ultimate respect of his peers, when was voted winner of the comic world's prestigious Eisner Award in 1988 and an Inkpot Award in '90.

Ken's personal philosophies are far tamer than the often dark and violent images depicted in the some of the comics he's illustrated. He believes too many publishers cater to a "nasty teenage boy" audience with savage, cynical heroes indistinguishable from the villains they're thwarting.

"I've taken my kids into the comics shops and had to steer them away from certain racks," he says, referring to his sons Alex, 12, and Raymond, 9. "They gravitated toward comics like Uncle Scrooge, but they kept running into what we jokingly call NLA comics—Non Life Affirming."

Ken's beliefs go beyond just words. To brighten the increasingly gloomy landscape of mainstream comics, Steacy recently formed Fractal Comics, which he describes as his "high-octane, user-friendly" fantasy factory in his Canadian home, Victoria, British Columbia.

Fractal's premiere offering was Steacy's own *The Awesome Adventures of Victor Vector & Yondo*, adapted from his CD-ROM series of the same name created for Sanctuary Woods Multimedia a few years ago. Victor is a

KEN'S LONG-TIME COLLABORATION WITH HIS FAVORITE AUTHOR, HARLAN ELLISON, WAS COLLECTED IN *NIGHT ENEMY* BY COMICO AND GRAPHITTI IN 1987.





THANKS, KID --
I NEEDED THAT!



TOP AND ABOVE: DC COMICS' FIRST CREATOR-OWNED SERIES, *TEMPUS FUGITIVE*, ALSO WAS KEN'S DEBUT AS A ONE-MAN BAND WHO HANDLED THE SCRIPT, THE PAINTING, THE LETTERING AND THE DESIGN.

THE AWESOME ADVENTURES CONTINUE!

VICTOR VECTOR & YONDO



The Awesome Adventures of VICTOR VECTOR & YONDO™ Interactive CD-ROM series from Sanctuary Minds Multimedia is now a reality! These issue sets, starting in July, written & illustrated by KEN STEACY!



bespectacled, somewhat doltish adventurer with a skintight suit and a best pal, a wise-cracking St. Bernard, named Yondo. The super man and his canine sidekick tumble back and forth through time via the Vector Vette. Between bouts with Count Dracula, mad scientists and other nefarious types, the duo gathers artifacts for the Museum of Fantastic Phenomena.

Ken's ultimate fantasy is "to see Victor Vector Pez dispensers," he says with a cynical smile. "That's the one thing I really, really want."

Before plasticized Victors begin spouting candies, however, Steacy will continue to revel in at least one assignment that suits his life-affirming ways perfectly—*STAR WARS*. "You can't go wrong with *STAR WARS*," says Ken. "George Lucas has opened a magic bag filled with imagination, thrills and spirited adventure that will stay with us for a long time. It's a wonderful ride that's always worth taking. Way to go, Georgel!" 🌌

ABOVE: VICTOR & YONDO BEGAN LIFE IN A QUARTET OF CD-ROMS AND NOW RESIDE IN A THREE-ISSUE MINISERIES FROM KEN'S OWN FRACTAL COMICS.

RIGHT: KEN'S VISIONS OF LUKE SKYWALKER AND HIS YOUTHFUL PREY, "WOMP RATS."



TAG

Here's the original to
character featured in
of Topps' Galaxy
This story can be used
roleplaying game. Read
for complete details

TIM ©
BRAD-
STREET
1993

GORBREN

ONE DANGEROUS BOUNTY HUNTER

"Morals and ethics. Whatever. I survive. Someday I'll start worrying about right and wrong. But for now I'll worry about the 5,000 credits you're worth." * Once, Taggor had a sense of right and wrong—a lifetime ago and thousands of light years away. That was when he was the youngest child in his family and his main concern in life was working their moisture farm on Tatooine. * Then the night raiders came. He heard them wailing as shots ripped into the walls of the house. Taggor was hit by a ricocheting bullet, but at least he survived. The raiders, for whatever reason, didn't kill him. Instead, they took him in as one of their own. * He grew up learning their language and customs; he covered his face as they covered theirs. He forged a bond with his riding beast—the furry bantha somehow knew he would die protecting her and that she would die for him. He raided with his brothers and shared in the spoils of the hunt. * When he became a man, Taggor was scarred as one of them. His icon, radiating from his right eye, was that of one of the twin suns, its unforgiving energy streaming to all corners of the universe. * Taggor was free to roam when not raiding. One night he came upon a Human who had strayed alone into the desert. She recoiled from him, but he had other ideas. Indeed, he had long desired a mate. She jabbered in the tongue he had spoken as a child; slowly, some of the words came back to him. Suddenly he sensed several other beings approaching. He confronted them and they offered food and supplies in exchange for the woman. Curious as to her fate, he went with them. He later learned that the beings worked for a gangster named Jabba. * Eventually Taggor left the desert, sensing power and wealth and something he had long forgotten—comfort. He relearned his native tongue and picked up several others. He earned a place as an enforcer. * In time, Taggor moved on to other systems, seeking other prey. He has learned what it means to be a hunter of men. He revels in the challenge and delights in the booty of a successful hunt. And as he cleans his blade at the end of each pursuit, he smiles, knowing that his brothers of the desert would be proud.

ART BY TIMOTHY BRADSTREET

TEXT BY BILL SMITH, EDITOR, WEST END GAMES



TAGGOR BREN

Type: Bounty Hunter

DEXTERITY 3D - Blaster 5D, Dodge 4D+2, Firearms 4D+1, Melee Combat 5D, Melee Parry 4D+1

KNOWLEDGE 2D - Intimidation 5D, Languages 3D, Survival: Desert 5D, Willpower 4D+2

MECHANICAL 3D - Beast riding 4D+2, Repulsor lift operation 3D+1

PERCEPTION 3D+2 - Search 5D+1, Sneak 4D+2

STRENGTH 4D - Brawling 5D, Climbing/lumping 5D+2, Stamina 4D+2

TECHNICAL 2D+1 - First aid 4D+1

Character Points: 15

Move: 10

Equipment: Vibro-blade (STR+2D), Blaster rifle (5D+2), projectile pistol (4D), radiation suit, radiation goggles, emergency rations, vibro-knife (STR+2), computerized targeting system (scomp linked to goggles and blaster rifle; +1D to Blaster)

Live the adventure!

You can take part in all-new *STAR WARS* adventures—like this original story of Taggor Bren, created exclusively for *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE*—where you decide what happens. It's called roleplaying, and all you need is *STAR WARS: The Roleplaying Game* (Second Edition) from West End Games and some six-sided (normal) dice.

What is a roleplaying game?

In short, roleplaying is "let's pretend, with rules." Each person plays his/her own *Star Wars* hero (a character). There's no limit as to whom you can be—a Rebel pilot, a smuggler, a bounty hunter or even a Jedi apprentice.

One player is the *gamemaster*—instead of playing a character, the gamemaster is the storyteller. He or she comes up with the adventure idea. Then he describes the scenes of the story to the players, then the players can decide what their characters are going to do.

The players must imagine what is going on around them and then have their characters react to those situations—but there's no script. The players can simply try whatever they can imagine.

Of course, there's always a chance a character will fail at something—like trying to fly her X-wing fighter between two asteroids. That's where the dice and *STAR WARS: The Roleplaying Game* rule book come in handy.

How do the rules work?

While the rule book has lots of special examples for those gamemasters who want to take into account every possibility, the game works the same way for just about everything.

First, the gamemaster decides how hard the task is and on a difficulty number. (There's a chart in the game suggesting difficulty numbers, like those listed above for Taggor.) If the task is very easy, the difficulty number might be five. If it's somewhat hard, the number might be 15. For really hard tasks, the number can be 30 or higher.

Next, the player rolls a certain number of dice for his character. How many? Look at the game statistics above for Taggor. After the listing for Dexterity, it says Blaster 5D. If you were Taggor, when the gamemaster told you to make a Blaster roll—when, for example, Taggor shoots at some Imperial stormtroopers—you roll five six-sided dice. Then total up the numbers. Let's say you rolled a 3, 4, 2, 5 and 3, you would tell the gamemaster your Blaster total was 17.

Sometimes there's a +1 or a +2 listed, like Taggor's 4D+2 for Dodge. That means you would roll four dice—say you get a 2, 1, 5 and 4—and then add another two to your total. Your Dodge total then would be 14.

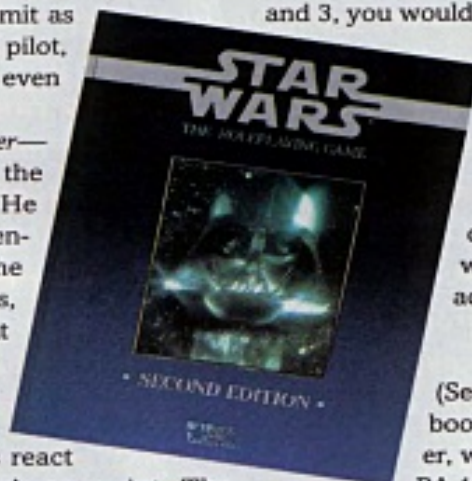
If the total number is equal to or higher than the difficulty number, the character has succeeded at what he is trying to do. If the total is lower, the character has failed.

How do I start?

Get your hands on *STAR WARS: The Roleplaying Game* (Second Edition) rule book at a comic, hobby, game or book store. To order the book directly from the publisher, write to West End Games, RR 3 Box 2345, Honesdale, PA 18431 and request a catalog.

West End Games, an official Lucasfilm licensee, publishes many supplements for roleplaying games, such as the *STAR WARS Sourcebook* and *The Movie Trilogy Sourcebook*. Those books provide an in-depth look at how the *STAR WARS* universe works—and plenty of ideas for game adventures.

West End Games also offers the *STAR WARS Adventure Journal*, a quarterly publication filled with *STAR WARS* roleplaying game adventures, game source material and game-related stories. The upcoming Issue #4, due out in November, features an original story by *STAR WARS* novelist Kathy Tyre (*The Truce at Bakura*). For subscription information, write to West End Games. ☺



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THE CRYSTAL STAR

A BOOK EXCERPT
BY VONDA N. MCINTYRE



ILLUSTRATION BY DREW STRUZAN



First Timothy Zahn reopened the door to George Lucas' dazed readers back to the fateful days following Return of the Jedi of Princess Leia, Dave Wolverton chronicled Han Solo's turbulent the tradition as the ultimate space adventure unfolds in T December. Along with this exclusive excerpt is an interview with

THE CHILDREN had been kidnapped.

Leia ran headlong toward the glade, leaving behind the courtiers and the chamberlain of Munto Codru, leaving her attendants, leaving the young page who—completely against protocol—had stumbled into Leia's receiving room, bleeding from nose and ears, incoherent.

But Leia understood her: Jaina and Jacen and Anakin had been stolen.

Leia ran, now, through the trees and down a soft mossy path that led into the children's playground. Jaina imagined the path was a starship course, set to hyperspace. Jacen pretended it was a great mysterious road, a river. Anakin, going through a literal phase, insisted that it was only a path through the forest to the meadow.

The children loved the forest and the meadow, and Leia loved exclaiming in wonder at the treasures they brought her: a squirmy bug, a stone with shiny bits trapped in its matrix—rare jewels perhaps!—or the fragments of an eggshell.

Her vision blurred with tears. Her soft slipper snared in the tangled moss. She stumbled, caught herself, and plunged onward, holding the skirts of her court robe high.

In the old days, she thought, in the old days, I'd be wearing boots and trousers, I wouldn't be hampered and tripped by my own clothing!

Her breath burned in her throat.

And I'd be able to run from my receiving room to the forest glade without losing my breath!

The green afternoon light shifted and fluttered around her. Before her, the light brightened where the forest opened into a water-meadow, the meadow where her children had been playing.

Leia ran toward it, gasping, her legs heavy.

She was running, toward an absence, not a presence, toward a terrible void.

She cried out to herself, How could this happen? How is this possible?

The answer—the only way it *could* be possible—terrified her. For a short time, her ability to sense the presence of her children had been neutralized. Only a manipulation of the Force could have such an effect.

Leia reached the meadow. She ran toward the creek where Jaina and Jacen had splashed and played and taught little Anakin to swim.

A crater was ripped into the soft grass. The leafy blades had been flattened into a circle around the raw patch of empty dirt.

A pressure bomb! Leia thought in horror.

A pressure bomb had gone off, near her children.

They aren't dead! she told herself. They can't be, I'd *know* if they were dead!

At the edge of the blast area, Chewbacca lay sprawled in a heap. Blood flowed bright against his chestnut coat.

Leia fell to her knees beside him, oblivious to the mud. She feared he was dead—

ng universe with his STAR WARS trilogy. Then Kathy Tyers took
i in her novel, *The Truce at Bakura*. And with *The Courtship*
campaign for the princess' hand. Now Vonda McIntyre continues
e *Crystal Star*, which will be published by Bantam Books in
th the author by Barbara Hambly, the next STAR WARS novelist.

but he was still bleeding, still breathing. She pressed her hand against the deep gash in his leg, desperate to stop the flow of blood and save his life. His powerful pulse drove the blood from his body. Like the page, he also bled from ears and nostrils.

A dreadful, grieving, keening sound escaped him, not a groan of pain but a cry of rage and remorse.

"Lie still!" Leia said. "Chewbacca, lie still! The doctor is coming. You'll be all right. What happened, oh, what *happened*?"

He cried out again, and Leia understood that he felt such despair that he wanted to die. He had adopted her family as his own, his Honor Family, and he had failed to protect the children.

"You can't die!" He must live, she thought. He *must*. Only he can tell me who stole my children. "Come back! Come back to me!"

Her aides and the chamberlain hurried out of the forest, trampling the delicate high grass, exclaiming in outrage when the slender blades cut them. Leia's children had wandered the meadow at liberty, neither leaving footprints nor receiving any harm. The grass parted before them like magic.

Magic, for my magic children, Leia thought. I thought I had protected them. I thought they could never come to any harm.

Hot tears ran down her cheeks.

The courtiers and advisers and guards gathered around her.

"Madam, madam," said the chamberlain of Munto Codru. Out here in the wild sun and the wind, Mr. Iyon's face was flushed and he looked uncomfortable.

"Did you bring the doctor?" Leia cried. "Get the doctor!"



ILLUSTRATIONS BY JUDA TYERSKI

An Interview with VONDA N. MCINTYRE

BY BARBARA HAMBLY



DAVID L. BERGER

"The children had been kidnapped..."

Thus starts *The Crystal Star*, the eighth of Bantam Books' series of *STAR WARS* novels, by Hugo and Nebula Award winner Vonda McIntyre.

"I don't remember learning to read," Vonda says, "but the first thing I remember reading is a science fiction novel."

Twenty five years ago Vonda McIntyre started writing science fiction. In the midst of relocating temporarily to Los Angeles from her native Seattle to participate in a screenwriters' workshop backed by the Chesterfield Film Company, Universal Studios and Amblin Entertainment, she was asked to take up the further adventures of Luke Skywalker, Leia Organa and Han Solo, the result of which will appear on bookstore shelves in November.

"*The Crystal Star* is the central metaphor of the book," Vonda explains,

"I sent for her, madam."

Mr. Lyon tried to make her get up, tried to take over staunching the flow of blood from Chewbacca's wound, but she pushed him away with a sharp word. Chewbacca's pulse faltered. Leia feared he was failing.

You will not die, she thought. You must not die. I won't let you die! She drew on her inadequate knowledge to strengthen him. She bitterly regretted the responsibilities of statecraft that had prevented her from being properly trained in the ways of the Force.

Leia knew that if she allowed Chewbacca's hot blood to gush past her hands, his life, too, would stream away.

The doctor ran across the field. Her wyrwulf loped behind her, carrying her equipment and supplies. The doctor's wyrwulf reminded her that Mr. Lyon's wyrwulf had been playing with her children.

It had disappeared as well.

Dr. Hyos knelt beside Leia. She observed Chewbacca's wound and Leia's first aid with a glance. "Ah," she said briskly. "Good work."

"Come away, now, Princess," the chamberlain said.

"Not yet!" Dr. Hyos exclaimed. "I have only four hands, after all. The princess is quite all right where she is."

The wyrwulf sat on its haunches between Leia and Dr. Hyos. Leia shuddered. The wyrwulf turned its massive head, slowly, gently, staring at her with great limpid liquid blue eyes. Its coat was thick and brown, with long coarse black guard hairs.

The doctor's wyrwulf panted and slavered, its tongue lolling over its pitted fangs. Its face was grotesque. Its hot bitter breath made Leia flinch away.

Dr. Hyos's four hands, so languid at rest, moved quickly over the panniers strapped to the wyrwulf's sides.

"Do you see what I am doing, my dear?" she said softly. "The bleeding is most important. Our princess has stopped it."

The doctor spoke to the wyrwulf, explaining everything she did.

Dr. Hyos drew pressure bandages from one compartment as she chose the proper medicine from another. Always, she told the wyrwulf what she was doing. Her long gold fingers were deft and sure.

Leia allowed herself a moment of hope, even with her hands covered by Chewbacca's hot blood. He had closed his eyes; he had stopped moving.

"As the bandage seals itself, my princess," Dr. Hyos said, "move your hand from the wound."

Leia obeyed. Dr. Hyos pressed the bandage to Chewbacca's flank. The bandage pressed itself against Leia's hand, clasped itself to Chewbacca, and wound its connectors through his fur. The wyrwulf watched, its tongue lolling.

Leia sat back on her heels. Her hands were sticky and her robes were smeared and she viewed everything in the clarity of horrified belief.

Dr. Hyos examined Chewbacca, frowning over the drying streaks of blood that had trickled from his nose and ears.

"Pressure bomb..." she said.

Leia remembered, as if from a distant dream, the sound of a single clap of thunder. She had thought—her thoughts had been so slow—that the morning must have turned from fair to rain; she had thought, fondly, that Chewbacca would soon bring the twins and Anakin in from the

meadow. She could take a moment from her duties to cuddle them, to admire their newest treasures, to see that they had their lunch.

Now it was mid-afternoon. How could it be so late in the day, when such a short time ago it had not yet been lunchtime?

"Madam—" Chamberlain Iyon said. But he did not try again to make Leia come away.

"Close the port," Leia said. "Block the roads. Can the page be questioned? Check the port controller—is there any chance the kidnappers have left the planet?"

As she spoke, she feared any measures she might take would be useless, and if not useless, too late.

But if they've fled, she thought, I could chase them in *Alderaan*. I could catch them. My little ship can catch anything—

"Madam, closing the port would not be wise."

She glared at him, instantly suspicious of a man she had trusted only a moment before.

"They took your—" She hesitated, unsure what to say.

"My wyrwulf, madam," he said. "Yes."

"Your wyrwulf. Don't you *care*?"

"I care very much, madam. And I understand our traditions, which you—I beg your pardon—do not. Closing the spaceport is unnecessary."

"The kidnappers will try to escape Munto Codru," she said.

Mr. Iyon spread his four hands.

"They will not. There are traditions," he said. "If we follow them, nothing will happen to the children—that too is the tradition."

Leia knew of Munto Codru's traditions of abduction and ransom. That was why Chewbacca had been staying so close to the children. That was why extra security surrounded and guarded the ancient castle. For the people of Munto Codru, coup abduction was an important and traditional political sport.

It was a sport in which Leia did not care to participate.

"It's a most audacious abduction," the chamberlain said.

"And a cruel one!" Leia said. "Chewbacca is wounded! And the pressure bomb—my children—" She fought for control of her voice and of her fear.

"The coup-counters detonated a pressure bomb only to prove that they could, madam," Mr. Iyon said.

"But no one is supposed to be injured during your coup abductions!"

"No one of noble birth, Princess Leia," he said.

"My title is 'Chief of State,' sir," she said angrily. "Not 'princess.' Not any longer. The world where I was a princess is long destroyed. We live in a Republic, now."

"I know it, madam. Please forgive our old-fashioned ways."

"They must know they haven't a hope," Leia said. "Of receiving a ransom, of escape. And if they should..." She could not bring herself to say the word *harm*.

"Please allow me to advise you in this matter," the chamberlain said. He leaned toward her, intense. "If you apply the rules of the Republic, disaster—tragedy—will be the result."

"The ransomers," Dr. Hyos said, with every evidence of approval, "must be very brave. But young and inexperienced as well. The family... which would it be?" She glanced at Mr. Iyon. "The Sibiu, perhaps?"

sitting back in her jeans and baggy white shirt in her Los Angeles studio apartment. "It's a white dwarf, a dying star, collapsed to a quantum plasma of subatomic particles and solidifying—freezing—at thousands and thousands of degrees. This is the true part. But in the *STAR WARS* universe it's unique, transforming into a perfect crystal and creating perturbations in space-time which dissociates the abilities of our heroes to use the Force. It's in orbit around a black hole and getting closer all the time.

"What's happening is obvious to everybody on this space station, Crseih, which used to be an Imperial outpost and is now a sort of border town. They know it's going to blow up, they just don't know when.

"Virtually everybody goes around in disguise in the book," Vonda continues, "including Chewbacca—and believe me, it's not easy to disguise a Wookiee. See-Threepio has himself lacquered purple. Oh, yeah, there's a dragon in it, too. There's a lot going on. It's a good story."

This sounds like an understatement to me.

"The *STAR WARS* movies were the first since [Stanley Kubrick's] 2001: *A Space Odyssey* to use the poten-

tial of science fiction on screen," says Vonda when asked about the appeal of the *STAR WARS* universe. "I nearly got a speeding ticket trying to go into hyperspace, coming back from seeing it for the first time. When that space cruiser goes over your head, my reaction was to give myself to the story, and that's something that I don't do easily."

"When I write a story in someone else's universe, what I'm trying to do is produce the same effect on my readers as the original produced in me. And if the effect of the original hadn't been wonderful, there wouldn't have been any point in accepting the assignment [for *The Crystal Star*] in the first place."

How did she go about preparing to write in the *STAR WARS* universe?

"I re-watched the three movies while writing," she reports. "I was a little nervous about watching them again. I'm not an analytical writer. My approach is pretty organic: I put stuff in the reptilian hindbrain and let it ferment awhile."

This isn't the first time Vonda McIntyre has written for a universe of someone else's creation. Not only is she the author of *Dreamsnake*, but her credits also include several *Star Trek* novels and nov-



"They have insufficient resources," the chamberlain said.

Whoever it was, Leia thought, needed only the resources of the Force. The dark side of the Force.

Mr. Iyon gestured to the broken ground, to Chewbacca. "This required a skiff, a tractor beam. Connections with arms smugglers, to obtain the pressure bomb."

"Ah. The Temebiu, then."

"It could be," the chamberlain said. "They are ambitious."

"I'll show them ambition," Leia muttered.

"Madam, please. Your children will not be harmed — *cannot* be harmed, for the ransomers to achieve their goal. They may look upon the event as a great adventure—"

"Our friend Chewbacca has been wounded nearly to death!" Leia cried. "My children will *not* find that amusing. Nor do I!"

"It is a shame," the chamberlain said. "Perhaps he did not comprehend the information on our traditions? He was meant to surrender."

"Close the port," Leia said again, her voice tight. She was too angry to respond to the chamberlain's comment. "I won't take any chances that they'll leave Munto Codru."

"Very well," Mr. Iyon said. "It is possible...but we must do it carefully. We must do it...in a way to amuse rather than offend...." His voice trailed off thoughtfully.

Dr. Hyos checked Chewbacca's pulse at the large vein the wound had come so close to piercing. "Stable. There. Good. To the surgery with you."

Chewbacca, barely conscious, gazed at Leia with uncomprehending eyes.

"Battlefield medicine," Dr. Hyos said. "Haven't done any in a long time. Didn't think I'd ever have to see a battlefield again."

"Neither did I," Leia said.

The wyrwulf howled.

HAN PILOTE^d the Millennium

Falcon through the strangest star system he had ever approached. An ancient, dying, crystallizing white dwarf star orbited a black hole in a wildly eccentric elliptical path.

Eons ago, in this place, a small and ordinary yellow star peacefully orbited an immense blue-white supergiant. The blue star aged, and collapsed.

The blue star went supernova, blasting light and radiation and debris out into space.

Its light still traveled through the universe, a furious explosion visible from distant galaxies.

Over time, the remains of the supergiant's core collapsed under the force of its own gravity. The result was degenerate mass: a black hole.

The violence of the supernova disrupted the orbit of the nova's companion, the yellow star. Over time, the yellow star's orbit decayed.

The yellow star fell toward the unimaginably dense body of the black hole. The black hole sucked up anything, even light, that came within its grasp. And when it captured matter—even an entire yellow star—it ripped the atoms apart into a glowing accretion disk. Subatomic particles imploded downward into the singularity's equator, emitting great bursts of radiation. The accretion disk spun at a fantastic speed, glowing with fantastic heat, creating a funeral pyre for the destroyed yellow companion.

The plasma spiraled in a raging pinwheel, circling so fast and heating so intensely that it blasted X rays out into space. Then, finally, the glowing gas fell toward the invisible black hole, approaching it closer and closer, appearing to fall more and more slowly as relativity influenced it.

It was lost forever to this universe.

That was the fate of the small yellow star.

The system contained a third star: the dying white dwarf, which shone with ancient heat even as it froze into a quantum crystal. Now, as the *Millennium Falcon* entered the system, the white dwarf was falling toward the black hole, on the inward curve of its eccentric elliptical orbit.

"Will you look at that," Han said. "Quite a show."

"Indeed it is, Master Han," Threepio said, "but it is merely a shadow of what will occur when the black hole captures the crystal star."

Luke gazed silently into the maelstrom of the black hole.

Han waited.

"Hey, kid! Snap out of it."

Luke started. "What?"

"I don't know where you were, but you weren't here."

"Just thinking about the Jedi Academy. I hate to leave my students, even for a few days. But if I *do* find other trained Jedi, it'll make a big difference. To the Academy. To the New Republic..."

elizations of three of the *Star Trek* films, *The Wrath of Khan*, *Search for Spock* and *The Voyage Home*.

"It's the difference between episodic TV and an evolving series of stories," says Vonda comparing *Trek* to *STAR WARS*. "*Star Trek* was episodic TV, and it still is. The characters in the novels had to be exactly the same at the end as at the beginning. *STAR WARS* has more freedom to allow the characters to grow and change. There's attention being paid to where stories fit in the scheme of things."

The Crystal Star takes place after the three Kevin Anderson *Jedi Academy* novels, when Han and Leia have been married about eight years and their children are five and three and a half (also shortly after my own *STAR WARS* novel, *Children of the Jedi*, to be published by Bantam next summer—not that I'm putting in a plug or anything.)

"In *STAR WARS*, Luke is a green kid, Leia is impetuous, not very..." A long search for the right word. "Not very tactful. Han Solo is just a wild and crazy space pirate. At the time I'm writing, Luke is a relatively seasoned Jedi. I say relatively because he has no surviving teachers; he has to make a lot of it up as he goes along. The Empire has wiped out all the elders of his group, and this troubles him.

"Leia is an experienced stateswoman. She's learned some tact. By the time of my story she

would no longer tell somebody his mere presence stunk up the ship, but she'd think of a way to cut him off at the knees...and he'd be around the corner and down the hall before he realized it.

"Han Solo still has a lot of elements of wild and crazy guy, but he's learned a lot of responsibility...I don't quite know how to put this. He appreciates the benefits of building a relationship with Leia, and with his kids as well.

"R2-D2 is obviously a god, but a sort of Coyote or Loki type god, not always completely dignified. In one place in my book they're in a low-gravity environment, and R2 manages to launch himself right off his treads; he goes sailing off the deck and ends up doing a loop-the-loop, beeping and honking pitifully. But he's the one who got them there in the first place, where they need to be to find the kids."

How does Vonda put all of this together into a finished novel?

"I dive in and discover the story as I go along. That's part of the fun. I know where I am going to end up, but I don't know quite how I'll get there.

"I'm a multi-draft person," she goes on. "I blast out the first draft, then polish and refine a couple more drafts. I used to do skezillions of drafts, but the past couple of years I haven't done that. It trou-

"I think we're getting along pretty well already," Han said, irked. He had spent years maintaining the peace with ordinary people. In his opinion, Jedi Knights could cause more trouble than they were worth. "And what if these are all using the dark side?"

Luke did not reply.

Han seldom admitted his nightmares; but he had nightmares about what could happen to his children if they were tempted to the dark side.

Right now they were safe, with Leia on a planetary tour of remote and peaceful worlds of the New Republic. By this time they must have reached Munto Codru. They would be visiting the beautiful mountains of the world's temperate zone. Han smiled, imagining his princess and his children being welcomed to one of Munto Codru's mysterious, ancient, fairy-tale castles.

Solar prominences flared from the white dwarf's surface. The *Falcon* passed it, heading toward the more perilous region of the black hole.

Han set the shields as high as they would go, and sped though the dangerous radiation. The accretion disk blazed wildly, its light harsh and actinic.

Neither white dwarf nor black hole possessed natural planets, only a few bits of distant debris and a halo of frozen comets. But the white dwarf did possess one artificial planetoid.

Crseih Station had been a secret Empire research facility. During the rule of the Emperor, it had moved from covert place to hidden location to secret destination. Wherever it went, it carried with it a reputation of evil.

Most of the records of its work had been destroyed when the Empire fell. Its researchers had fled, to surrender to the New Republic or to disappear. Han knew only one thing about Crseih for certain. It had been sent to this star system to adapt the destructive power of the black hole to the martial ambitions of the Emperor.

Crseih had failed, but it still existed, hidden out here on the edge of civilization, isolated by the disruption of the exploding, dying stars. Some inhabitants remained, content to be free of the Empire. They also lived outside the New Republic, without the protection of its justice.

Without the protection, or the restraints.

Han plunged the *Millennium Falcon* into the shadow of Crseih Station. He breathed a sigh of relief. Light from the white dwarf still illuminated his ship, but the station blocked the intense X rays of the black hole.

Like a patchwork umbrella, powerful shielding covered half the irregular artificial planetoid of Crseih Station. As the station had grown, the patches had spread. Shielding formed the residence domes and the corridors of the airlinks. Transparent to the visual spectrum, it protected the equipment and the inhabitants from high-energy radiation. The shielding shimmered in patterns of shadow. Wherever a particularly intense burst of radiation assaulted the shielding, it darkened.

Han set the *Millennium Falcon* down on a bare patch of blasted stone. Crseih had nothing much in the way of a spaceport. A few itinerant hyperdrive mechanics and refuelers. A rental company that specialized in shielding.

Han made arrangements for an extra shield for the *Millennium Falcon*. A few minutes later, a crawler shuffled toward them, towing the big transparent sheet.



"Efficient," Luke said.

"Or bored. Sure isn't much traffic." He scowled. "Wouldn't you know. First vacation I ever get, and I come to a backwater."

"Threepio, where's your contact?" Luke asked.

A few dozen other ships of various types and vintages hunkered down on the blasted rock. Most were shielded. A few had been left naked and exposed in the cosmic weather, decaying to derelicts.

"Here to meet us, I'm virtually certain, Master Luke." See-Threepio peered nervously through the viewport. "Perhaps riding out on the crawler?"

See-Threepio fidgeted. A few weeks ago, Han had begun to receive incomprehensible messages. But Threepio recognized the language; he said it was nearly extinct. The messages passed on rumors of strange events at Crseih Station.

"It is my fault we've set out on this investigation," See-Threepio said.

Han had charged Threepio with replying to the messages, using the same obscure language, and with setting up a rendezvous. Now Threepio, being Threepio, took full responsibility for the entire expedition.

"I do hope we are not following a hoax," Threepio said.

"It's all right, Threepio," Han said. "It wouldn't be your fault."

"But I could hardly survive the embarrassment if the rumors turned out to be of no account...."

Han gave up listening to Threepio's worries. Han would be sorry for Luke, of course, if he failed to find the lost Jedi. But Han was content to be here, whether the trip turned out to be a vacation or adventure. ☺

bled me until I realized it meant I was getting more experienced."

Her screen writing workshop in L.A., Vonda says, is a new world.

"I've learned to look at scripts from the point of view of what the novel would have been if the script had been based on a novel. Screen writing is a very different craft. A lot of novelists think it's an easy craft, but it's not.

"Writing is a tough job. It's not as hard as that guy working out in the yard, physically. But if you're not enjoying what you're doing, it's sort of pointless."

In conjunction with *The Crystal Star*, Bantam Books will also be publishing Vonda's science fiction novel *Nautilus*, the fourth in her *Starfarers* series. At the same time, Bantam will reissue the earlier books of the *Starfarers* series—*Starfarers*, *Transition* and *Metaphase*—as well as *Dreamsnake*.

For an autographed bookplate from Vonda McIntyre, send an SASE to her at P.O. Box 31041, Seattle WA 98103. Be sure to request a *STAR WARS* bookplate specifically.

.....
Barbara Hambly is the author of many science fiction and fantasy novels. Her latest, *Stranger at the Wedding*, will be published by Del Rey Books in November. Barbara lives in southern California.

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REVVING UP THE 'JEDI ENGINE'

The story behind the making of LucasArts' hard-driving new computer game, *Dark Forces*

BY PETER SPEAR

It began in July of 1993 as a LucasArts project to explore a "technology unknown"—an experimental system called the "Jedi Engine"—for creating a new CD-ROM computer game. The storyline of the game was another unknown, other than that it would involve Luke Skywalker adventuring through the *STAR WARS* universe. The player would experience everything from a 3-D, first-person perspective—Luke's point of view. The details would be filled in later.

That was about all that programmer Ray Gresko and project leader Daron Stinnett had to go by. Mostly they were working to see where the engine they were building would lead.

It led to *Dark Forces*, the ground-breaking CD-ROM game from LucasArts. And, in the end, both Jedi and Luke Skywalker were left behind.

"We didn't use the old characters, like Luke, because everyone already knows them," says Justin Chin, the co-designer and writer of *Dark Forces*. "Anyway, most people simply want to explore the *STAR WARS* universe." From that premise, Chin developed an entirely original story.

Dark Forces revolves around the adventures of a brand-new protagonist—Kyle Katarn, an undercover agent for Rebel Command, the Rebel Alliance's covert-operations division. Kyle

is a mercenary-for-hire who, as it turns out, was the spy in *STAR WARS* stole the plans for the Death Star from the Emperor and delivered them to Princess Leia. He is a major new character created to be part of the events of the *STAR WARS* trilogy.

Dark Forces introduces a deadly super army of mechanized stormtrooper replacements known as dark troopers, created by the aging Admiral Mohc to annihilate the Alliance. With heavy weapons and near-impenetrable armor, they are like condensed walkers, in terms of massive destructive power, but are able to infiltrate Rebel targets with much greater speed and stealth. Mohc envisions them one day numbering in the millions.

Fortunately for the Alliance, the dark troopers are still in the production stage, but Empire factories are working overtime. As Kyle Katarn, the game player must travel the galaxy searching for clues about the dark troopers—and destroy the manufacturing process before the armies are built.

A daring protagonist like Kyle of course needs a nasty antagonist, and Mohc is Kyle's Darth Vader as the two are led toward a final confrontation. Another character introduced in *Dark Forces* is beautiful Ruu San, a member of the Empire's lethal Special Operations and the Imperial counterpart to Kyle, as far as ability and cunning. Her objective is

WHO ARE THESE MASKED MEN...?



to protect the secrecy of Operation Dark Trooper at all costs.

And, finally, one of the most mysterious *STAR WARS* characters makes a major appearance in the game. Boba Fett, hired gun and invincible powerhouse, makes sure that Kyle doesn't hang around any one place too long.

There are 15 different missions to be completed in *Dark Forces*. They take place at various locations across the galaxy, including secret mineral mines, Imperial prisons, star bases, an ice planet, Jabba the Hutt's starship and a massive Imperial Star Destroyer. Each mission is introduced by a cinematic "cut scene," complete with actors, di-

GAME ROOM

ologue and other niceties of today's computer games.

On the subject of computers, *Dark Forces* is built for speed. Of course, you'll need a CD-ROM player, of which double-speed models are the best. While the game can be played on a fast 386-based PC, it really needs a faster 486 machine to be enjoyed at its fullest. And a sound card and stereo speakers. And lots of RAM and about 20 megabytes of hard disk real estate. In fact, *Dark Forces* promises to be so good, it could be just the excuse you've been looking for to finally buy a computer.

Dark Forces is *STAR WARS* for



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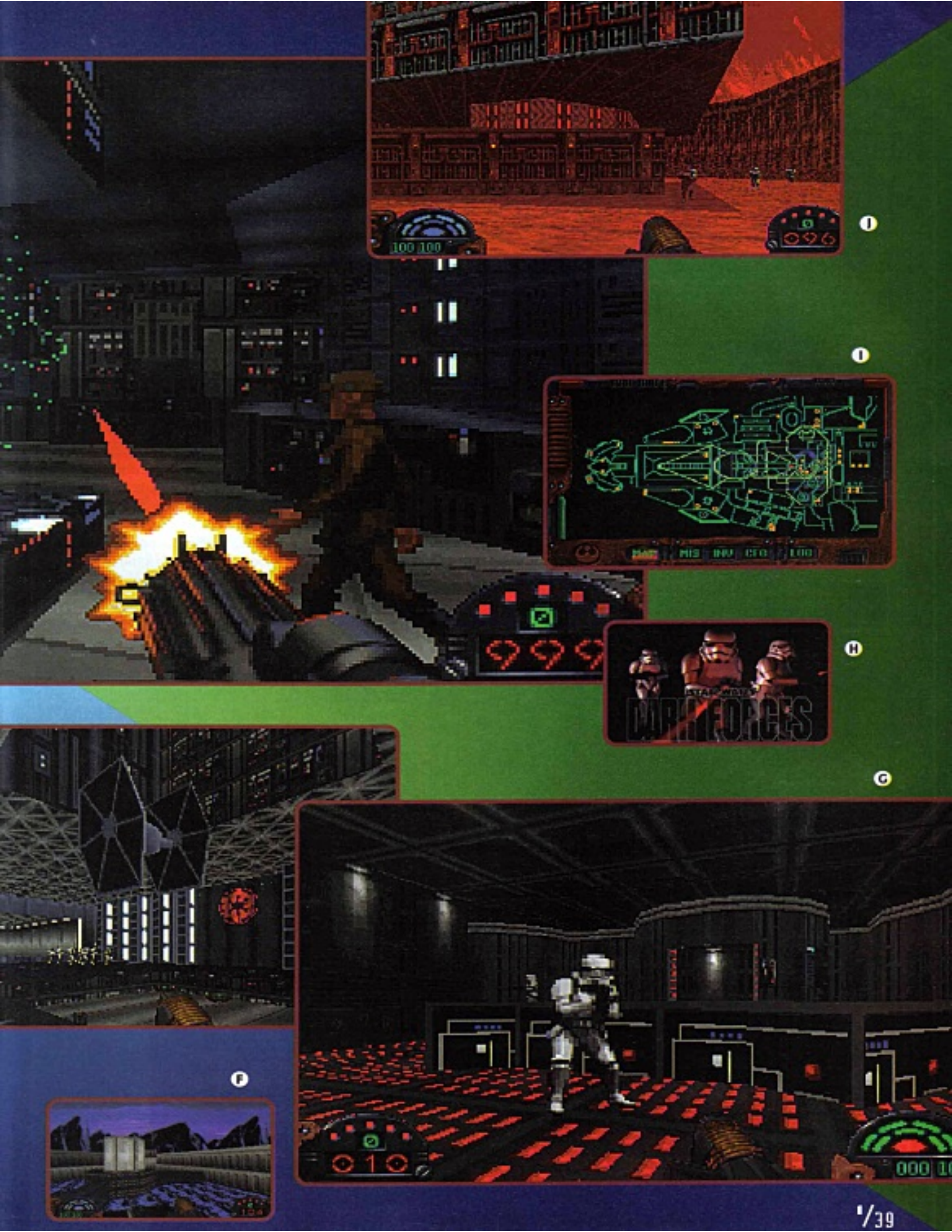
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DARK FORCES

Before you climb behind the wheel of the new Jedi Engine-driven computer game from LucasArts, here's a visual test drive of several scenes: A) Inside an Imperial base that stores the Death Star plans; B) View from an Imperial Fuel Station of hero Kyle Katarn's ship resting in a landing hangar; C) Core reactor to a mining station on the small planet Gromas, a major facility where the metal for making the Dark Troopers is found; D) Main security elevators and catwalks on the Super Star Destroyer, the Executor; E) Hangar bay inside the Executor; F) Disabled hydroelectric generator on the planet Talay; G) Interior of a high-security detention center, a way station for prisoners before their execution by the Empire; H) *Dark Forces* title screen; I) Map of a Star Destroyer; J) Exterior shot of the mining arm that continuously drills into the small planet Gromas; Kyle must destroy the reactor core.



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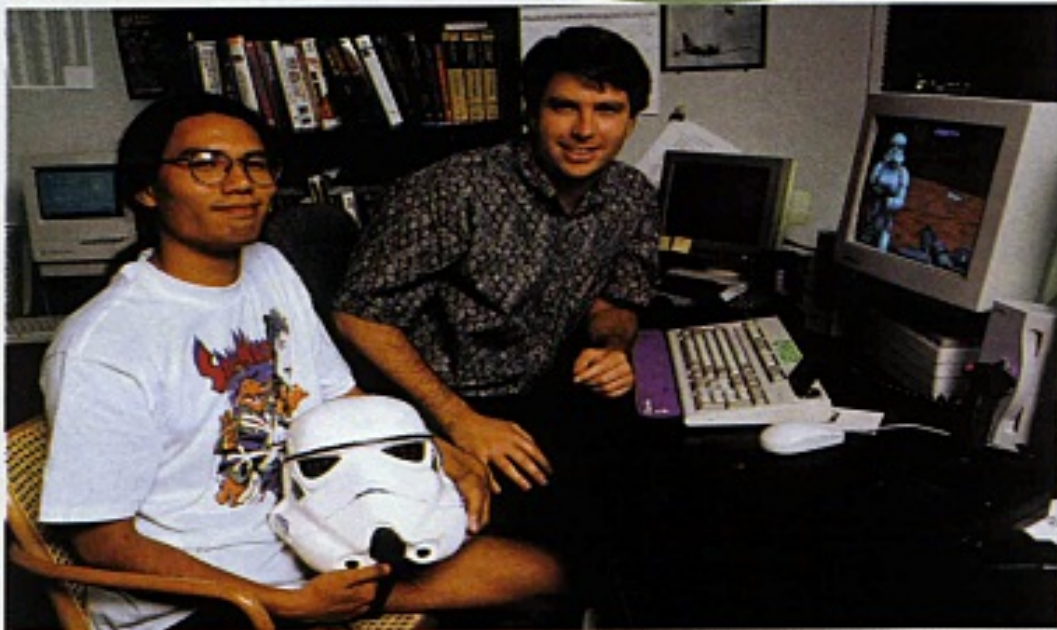


the mid-1990s. It is a gorgeous, massive, action-strategy game. Its spectacular graphics and animation are fast and smooth; response to the player is sure and instantaneous.

The story sucks you in, so learning to play the game takes no time. You can play for 10 minutes—or 10 hours.

Think of *Dark Forces* as *Doom* on the Death Star—battling Imperial stormtroopers (and worse) all the way—only better. If you don't know that

"We didn't use the old characters, like Luke, because everyone already knows them," says Justin Chin, the co-designer and writer of *Dark Forces*. "Anyway, most people simply want to explore the *STAR WARS* universe."



game, think of straight-ahead firepower and adrenaline rush. Shoot anything and everything that moves. Run, jump, duck, hide and explore from a point-of-view perspective—through the eyes of the character. And think of action film-like predicaments which must be overcome to gain victory. *Dark Forces'* rich, well thought-out and detailed story gives its mayhem a satisfactory purpose and keeps the plot moving at breakneck speed.

Beyond the story, the soul of *Dark Forces* is the Jedi Engine, the program that allows the different elements to come together. It's something that game players never notice—nor should they.

"Making a good game is one thing," says project leader Stinnett. "But the Jedi Engine is cool! We were trying to develop

...UNMASKED, THEY'RE JUSTIN CHIN (LEFT) AND DARON STINETT, THE FUN-LOVING DUO LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF *DARK FORCES*.

both a game and a technology at the same time. We had no idea what we would end up with." The Engine is a continual work in progress, to be used with games besides *Dark Forces*, including a planned sequel.

Even with the innovative Jedi Engine, creating this sophisticated computer game also required the combined talents of writers, designers, programmers, artists and musicians. After Stinnett and Chin collaborated to design *Dark Forces*, Chin wrote a 30-page document detailing the game's background story and plot twists.

Each mission—called "levels" by the production team—was described: purpose and goal of the level; enemies to be faced; weapons available; and basic obstacles to overcome. Chin also created histories and back-

grounds for all the characters, locations and levels.

The LucasArts team then hired some architecture students from Cal, who used the Jedi Engine to help design spaceships, cities, mines, buildings and other sites where the missions take place.

Stinnett and Chin insisted that each level be architecturally sound and logical, inside and out. For example, a cooling tower that begins at the bottom of a vessel and exits at the top had to appear in the middle of the ship, too. Corridors had to lead somewhere, not just meander.

From those designs, a group of artists, working on high-tech SGI Indigo workstations, rendered accurate exteriors. Another art team created a library of more than 100 interior designs, or texture maps, which give three-dimensionality to the interiors. Each mission has a unique look, and each is stunning.

The enemies, or "monsters" as they're referred to in *Dark Forces*, were created and animated separately. Then programmers coded them to perform their specific actions.

The last major element to be coordinated was the game's music—an integral part of any LucasArts product. *Dark Forces* employs LucasArts' patented technology known as iMUSE, a process that recomposes the game's music on the fly, thereby avoiding the usual, annoying repetition of most game music.

So there you have today's short course on how to produce a computer game, plus the history of the Jedi Engine. Expect that Engine to roar once gamers get behind the wheel of *Dark Forces*... and to roar and roar again as it drives a whole new generation of computer games. ☺

Peter Spear writes for *Infotainment World*, the California-based publishers of *GamePro* and *Electronic Entertainment* magazines.

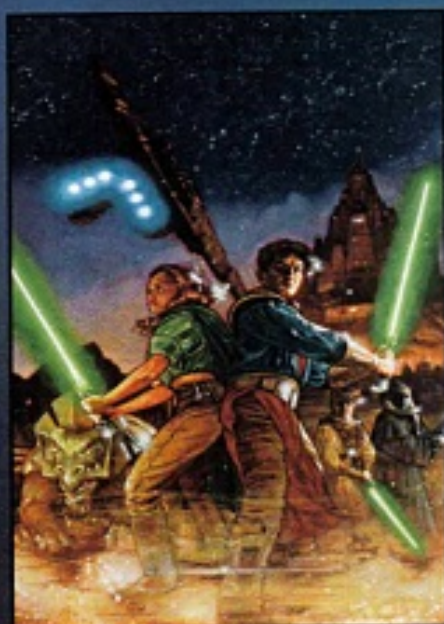
WHEN THE
CYCLE IS COMPLETE
AND THE CIRCLE
IS ENCLOSED,
TRUTH AND JUSTICE
WILL STAND
TRIUMPHANT!



CLASSIC
**STAR
WARS**
RETURN OF THE JEDI

The final chapter
in the trilogy
that shook the Galaxy!
By Archie Goodwin,
Al Williamson,
and Carlos Garzon.

STAR WARS
TALES OF THE
JEDI
THE COLLECTION



4,000 years before
Luke fought for the
universe, two young
warriors fought to
become Jedi.

Collecting the hit
Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi
series in a single volume.

HE HAS THE POWER
TO SAVE THE GALAXY,
AND THE ARROGANCE
TO DESTROY IT.

STAR WARS
TALES OF THE
JEDI
Dark Lords of the Sith



An arrogant young
Jedi awakens a
deadly power in his
blind quest to become
a Dark Lord of the Sith.

Beginning an all-new
Star Wars adventure
by Kevin J. Anderson,
Tom Veitch,
and Chris Gossett.



QUALITY, DIVERSITY, CREATIVITY

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Double Your STAR WARS PLEASURE

On the heels of one all-new comic,
Dark Horse will release the
long-awaited sequel to another

BY CHARLIE NOVINSKIE



What could be better than the premiere of a brand-new *STAR WARS* series from Dark Horse Comics? How about the hotly anticipated sequel to a previous one. Well, that's exactly the double dip being scooped out to hungry fans from Dark Horse's Portland, Oregon, headquarters over the next few months.

The adventure begins in October with the release of *STAR WARS: Tales of the Jedi/Dark Lords of the Sith*, the first of 12 monthly comics in a two-part series of all-new stories. Then, in December, the sequel to 1991's phenomenal *STAR WARS: Dark Empire* series hits comic shops and newsstands.



What a great way to ring in a new year!

Dark Lords of the Sith combines the writing talents of two well-known *STAR WARS* contributors—Tom Veitch, author of the original *Dark Empire* comics, and Kevin J. Anderson, author of Bantam Books' *Jedi Academy* trilogy of novels. Anderson calls *Dark Lords of the Sith* "a science fiction version of *War and Peace*." Could we have another epic on our hands here?

**SCENES FROM
THE FIRST DARK
LORDS OF THE
SITH, INCLUDING
COVER ART
(RIGHT) BY
HUGH FLEMING**



SHHH—DON'T
WORRY ABOUT CRACKLEHELL
BE FINE.

IT IS
YOUR TURN TO TEST
YOURSELF AGAINST THIS
KNOWLEDGE WHO THINKS
SO HIGHLY OF
YOURSELF?

GLADLY
MASTER.

IF WILL TO HELP THE BATTLE,
THEN SILENCE AND FOCUS YOUR
NEW MIND. LIVES OF LIGHTS
SAB RAIL TAKE SPECIAL
PLEASURE IN REPEATING
ROCK RING!

THESE LIGHTSABERS CLASH WITH
SUCH FORCE THE SOUND CAN BE
HEARD FOR KILOMETERS!

THUNDERING

IT'S TIME YOU
LEARNED THAT ANSWER
WHY ARE NO MATCH
FOR ANSWER!

YOU FINALLY
THE CATHARTIC RAGE
GREAT JEDI MASTERS
HAVE COME FROM
MY WORLD!

Anderson and Veitch first met a few years ago, shortly after Kevin began plotting out *Jedi Academy* and discovered *Dark Empire*. They had several conversations about how to keep their separate storylines on a similar *STAR WARS* track. "We needed to maintain a continuity between my comics and Tim Zahn's novels," says Veitch.

From that initial encounter, *Dark Lords of the Sith* was born. And as in all *STAR WARS* stories, it has good guys and bad guys. That latter group suits Anderson just fine. "I've always felt villains are the most interesting characters," he says, "because of their motivations. Darth Vader and Jabba the Hutt were always my favorites because the source of their evil was always drawn from self delusions."

Continuity is an issue Veitch and Anderson have to address with *Dark Lords of the Sith*, too. Making sure that the past 17 years of *STAR*

WARS myths are always taken into account when writing new stories is no easy task. The duo's first step was to establish an ongoing storyline for the entire comics series.

"I sent Kevin an outline, and he expanded on it," says Veitch. "We kept sending the outline back and forth until we had a plot for all 12 issues. Actually, it was a three-way collaboration between myself, Kevin and Chris Gossett, the artist on the series." Then, at Lucasfilm, Production Editor Sue Rostoni and Continuity Editor Allan Kausch would verify everything.

"We ended up working in sort of a Marvel style after seeing Chris' art," says Tom. "His work added so much to the story that we always added and changed dialogue after seeing it."

Dark Lords of the Sith is an action-packed adventure that takes place immediately after *Tales of the Jedi/The Freedon Nadd Uprising*, says Dark Horse Comics Editor Dan Thorsland. In that two-issue series, which just concluded, Jedi Knights Ulic Qel-Droma and Nomi Sunrider fight to free the planet Onderon from the Sith Magician, King Ommin. *Dark Lords of the Sith* teams Exar Kun, a character from Anderson's *Jedi Academy*, with Ulic.

Issue #1 opens with the release of an ancient and powerful force upon the universe. Young Jedi Ulic is responsible for unleashing the deadly force. He's drawn into the embrace of the dark side. Will he become a Dark Lord of the Sith?

Gossett again is working with fellow artist Mike Barreiro, both hoping to repeat their stellar performance from the first *Tales of the Jedi*. Providing the initial glimpse of the stories acclaimed cover artist Hugh Fleming, whose credentials include work on Topps' Universal Monster trading cards.

Speaking of Topps cards, copies of *Dark Lords of the Sith* #1 will be bagged with a *STAR*

**IN DARK LORDS
OF THE SITH,
JEDI KNIGHT
ULIC QEL-DRO-
MA IS TEMPTED
TO GO OVER TO
THE DARK SIDE
OF THE FORCE.**



WARS Galaxy card previewing art from the upcoming *Star Wars: Dark Empire II*.

Dark Empire was the premiere series that launched Dark Horse in 1991 to the forefront of comic publishers producing new *STAR WARS* stories for Lucasfilm. Since the debut of the six-issue, painted series, fans have eagerly awaited a sequel. They're getting an early Christmas present as the much-anticipated sequel ships in December. Reuniting the writer/artist team of Veitch and Cam Kennedy, as well as cover-artist extraordinaire Dave Dorman, *Dark Empire II* will be a six-issue, fully painted, monthly series.

The sequel explodes with excitement as Boba Fett is in hot pursuit of Han and Leia. Joining the hunt is a dark mysterious figure.... Has the Emperor, thought to be long dead at the conclusion of *Dark Empire*, risen from the grave? And what exactly is the new weapon of destruction headed for the New Alliance homeworld?

Meanwhile, Luke seeks out the help of a long-lost Jedi, hidden for years from the Empire's evil, genocidal scourge. But con-

sidering that Luke has had a taste of the dark side of the Force, will he be able to resist further temptation?

Hey, we're not going to tell. But we will say that we don't think anyone will have to force themselves to pick up the first issues of both *Dark Empire II* and *Lords of the Sith*! ☮

Charlie Novinskie is Assistant Editor at Topps Comics in New York.

STAR WARS Comics Checklist

DARK EMPIRE: Six issues; stories by Tom Veitch, art by Cam Kennedy, covers by Dave Dorman. All six issues have been collected into a trade paperback.

CLASSIC STAR WARS: Twenty monthly issues featuring color adaptations of the *STAR WARS* newspaper strips; stories by Archie Goodwin, art by Al Williamson. The first seven issues have been collected into a trade paperback.

TALES OF THE JEDI: Five monthly issues; first in a series; stories by Veitch, art by Chris Gossett, Mike Barreiro, Janine Johnston and David Roach.

DROIDS: Six monthly issues; stories by Dan Thorsland and Ryder Windham, art by Bill Hughes, Andy Mushynsky and Ian Gibson.

THE EARLY ADVENTURES: Nine monthly issues featuring *STAR WARS* newspaper strips; stories and art by Russ Manning.

A NEW HOPE: Two issues featuring re-colored, previously published stories by Roy Thomas; various artists including Howard Chaykin.

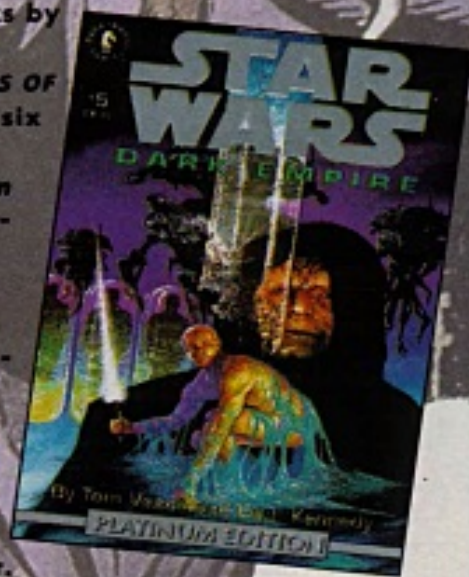
EMPIRE STRIKES BACK: Two issues featuring re-colored, previously published adaptation of the film; stories by Goodwin, art by Williamson.

RETURN OF THE JEDI: Two issues adapted from previously published movie adaptation; stories by Goodwin, art by Williamson.

TALES OF THE JEDI/THE FREEDON NADD UPRISING: Two issues; picks up where *Tales of the Jedi* left off, leads directly into *Dark Lords of the Sith*; stories by Veitch, pencils by Tony Akins, inks by Denis Rodier.

TALES OF THE JEDI/DARK LORDS OF THE SITH: Two-part series, six monthly issues per series; picks up where *The Freedom Nadd Uprising* left off; stories by Veitch and Kevin J. Anderson, pencils by Chris Gossett, inks by Mike Barreiro, covers by Hugh Fleming; on sale now.

DARK EMPIRE II: Six monthly issues; sequel to *Dark Empire*; stories by Veitch, art by Kennedy, covers by Dorman; ships in December.





STAR WARS® DROIDS™

DEAR,
OH DEAR!

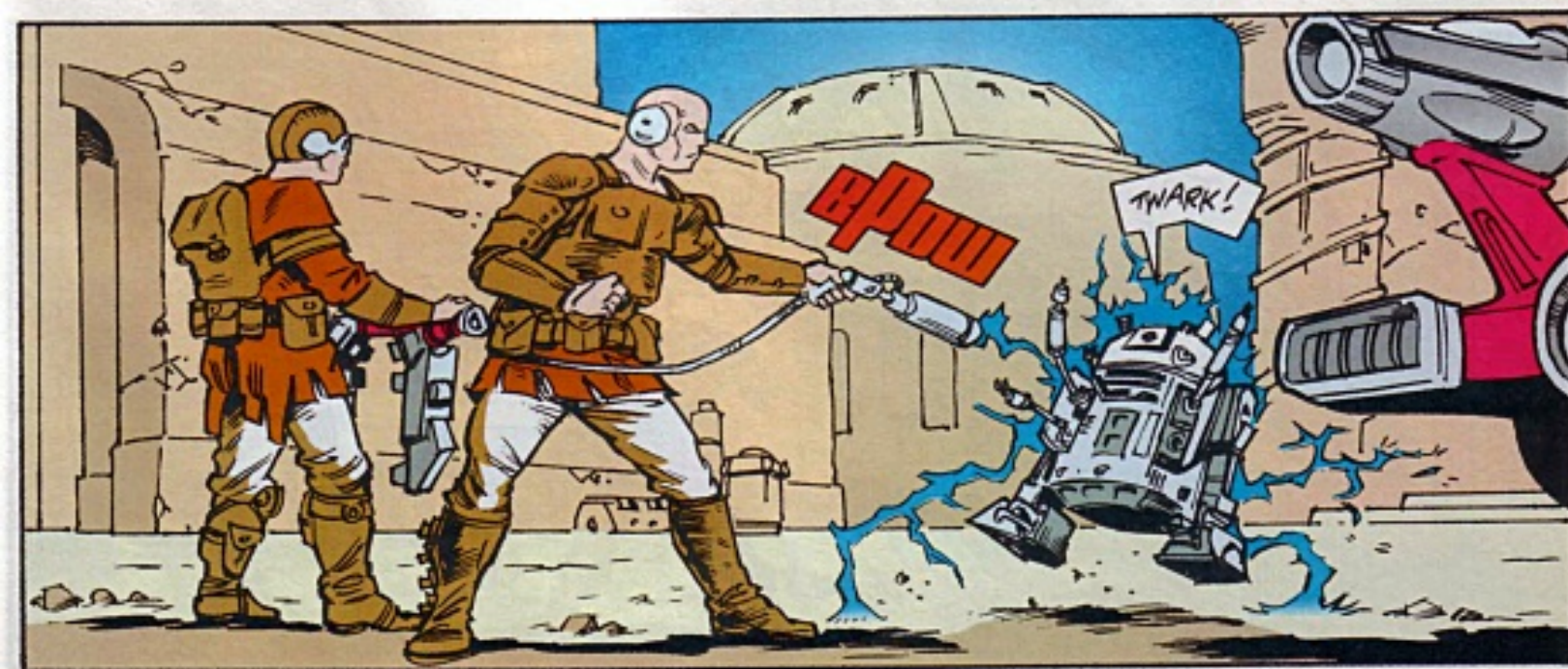
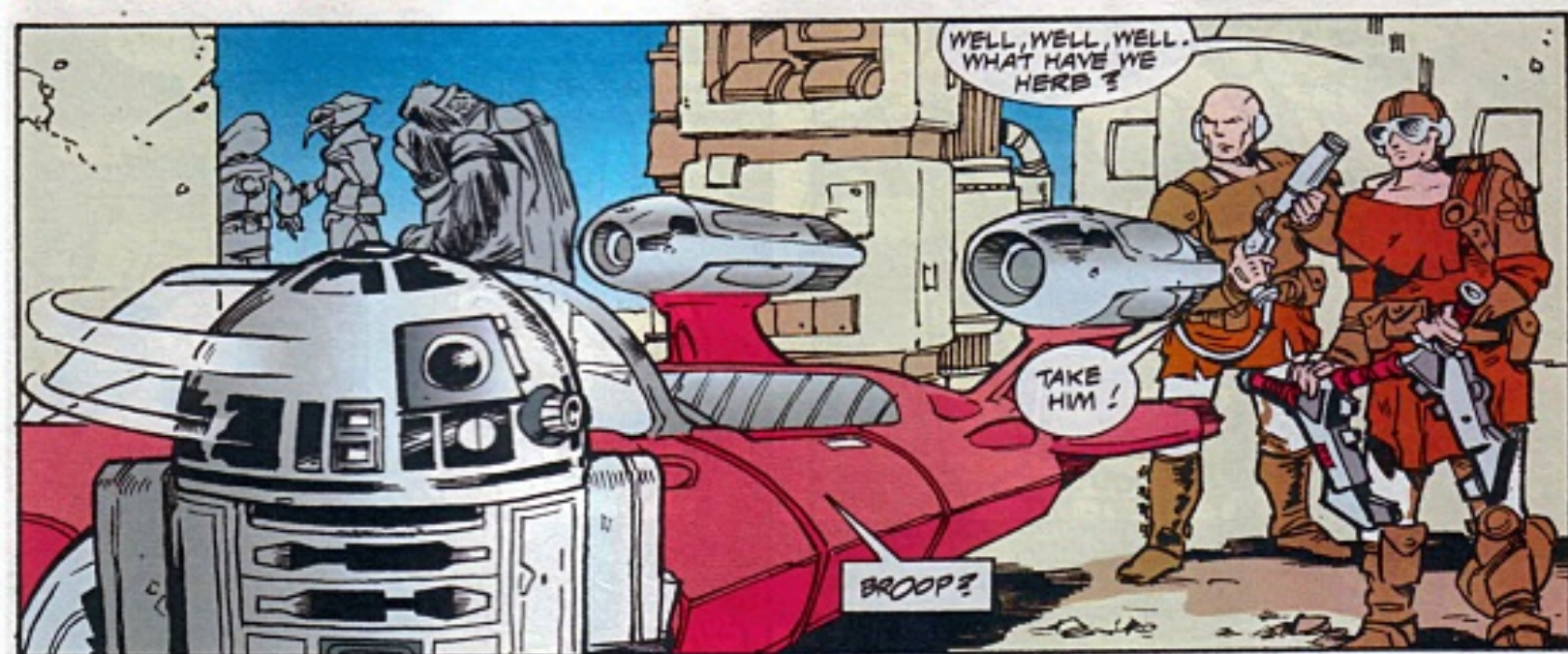
FARDON ME
FOR SAYING SO,
BARON, BUT THIS
DOESN'T SEEM TO BE
ONE OF KALARBA
CITY'S MORE
RESPECTABLE
NEIGHBORHOODS!

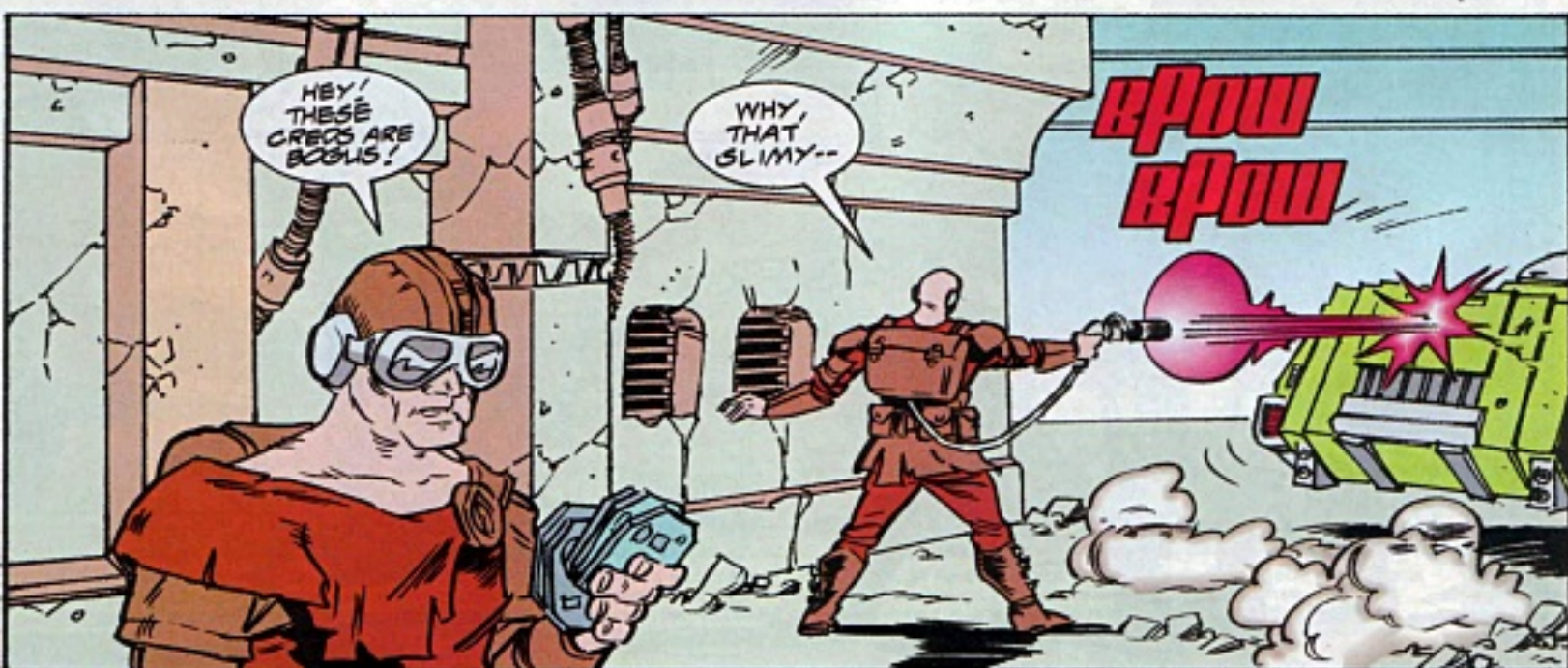
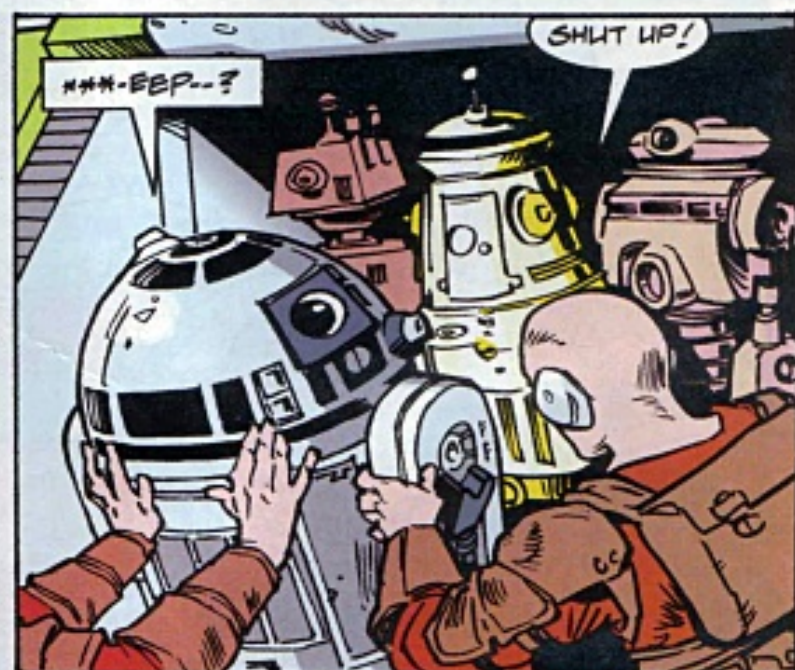
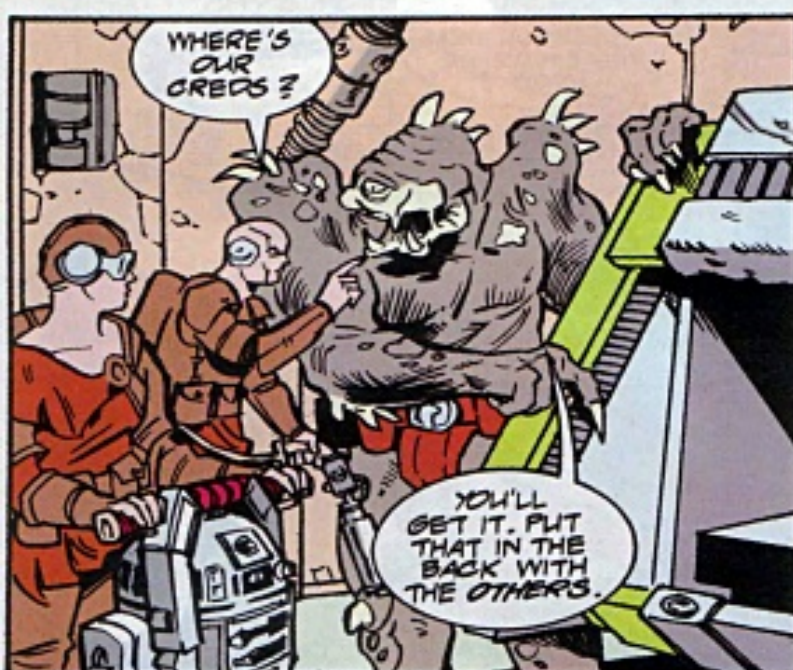
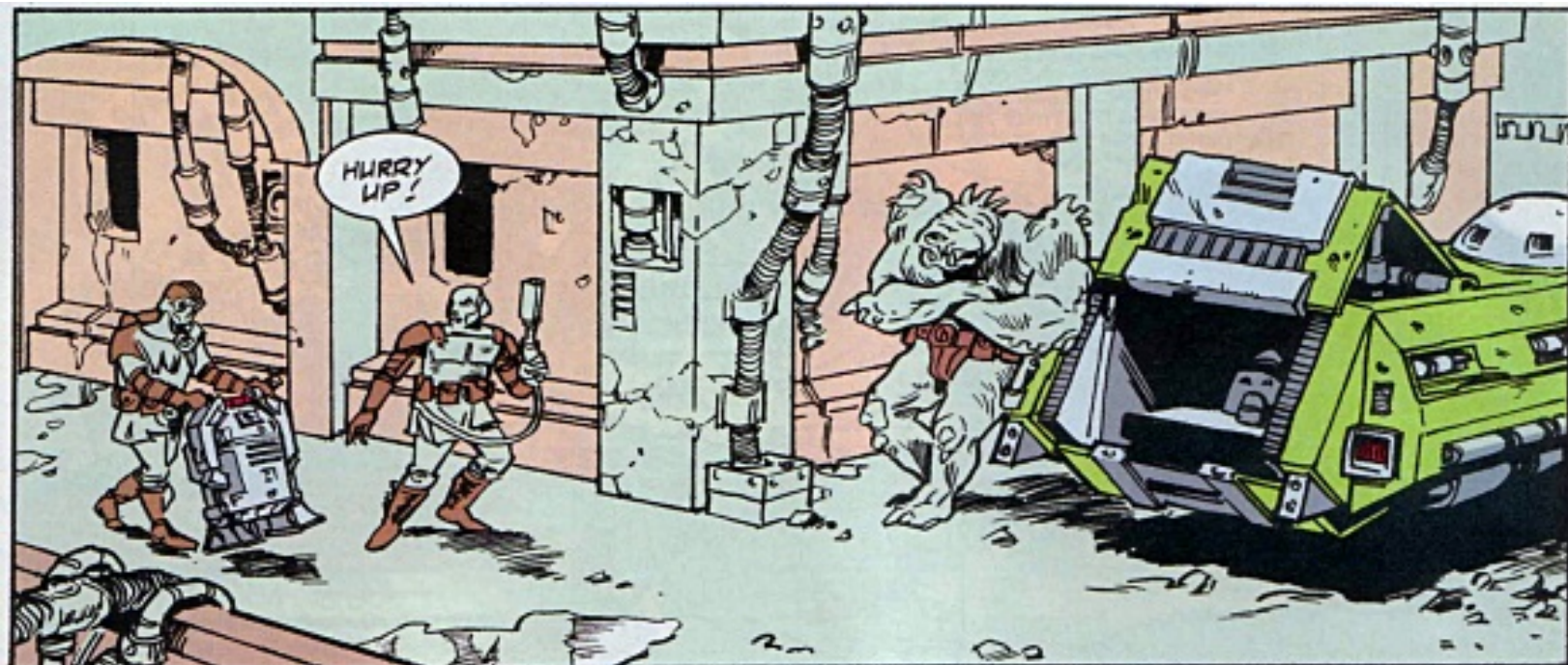
DON'T
WORRY, THREEPIO.
MY BUSINESS
NEGOTIATIONS
SHOULDN'T TAKE
LONG WITH YOU
AS A TRANSLATOR!

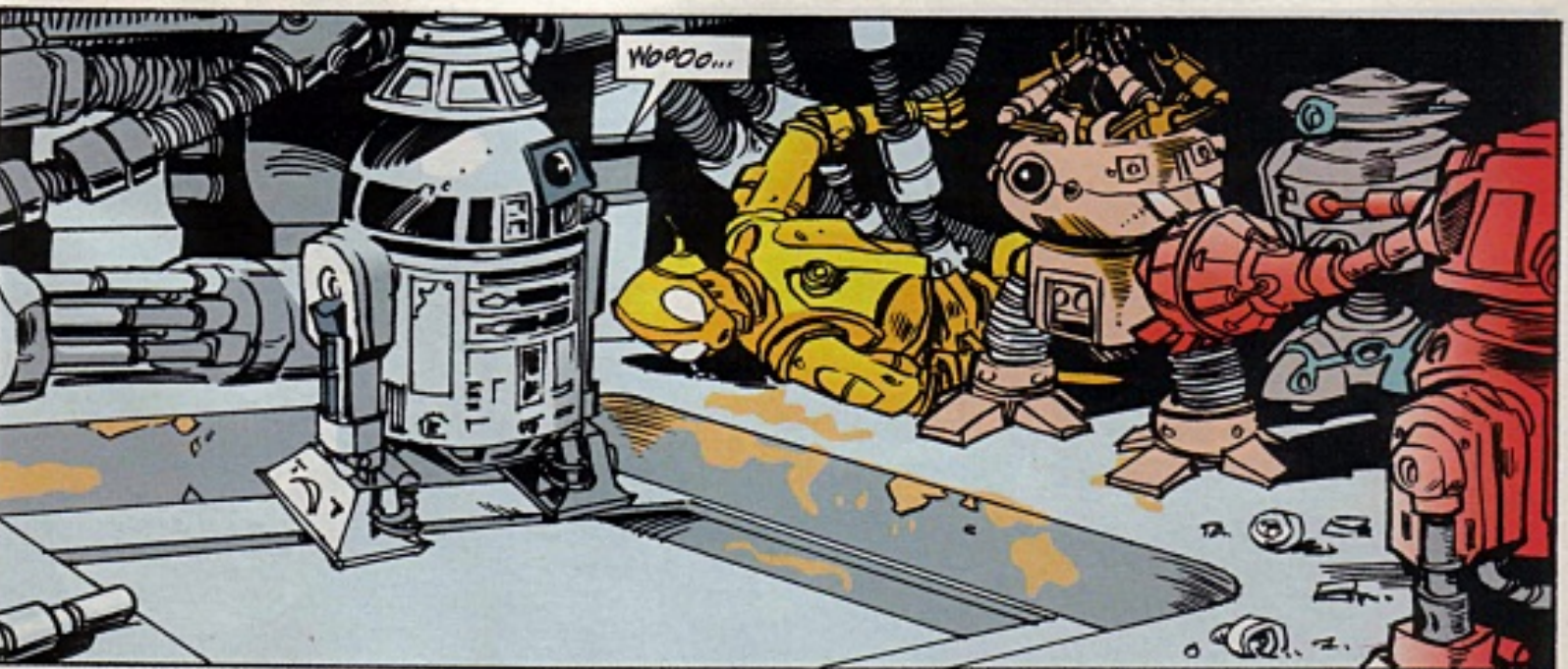
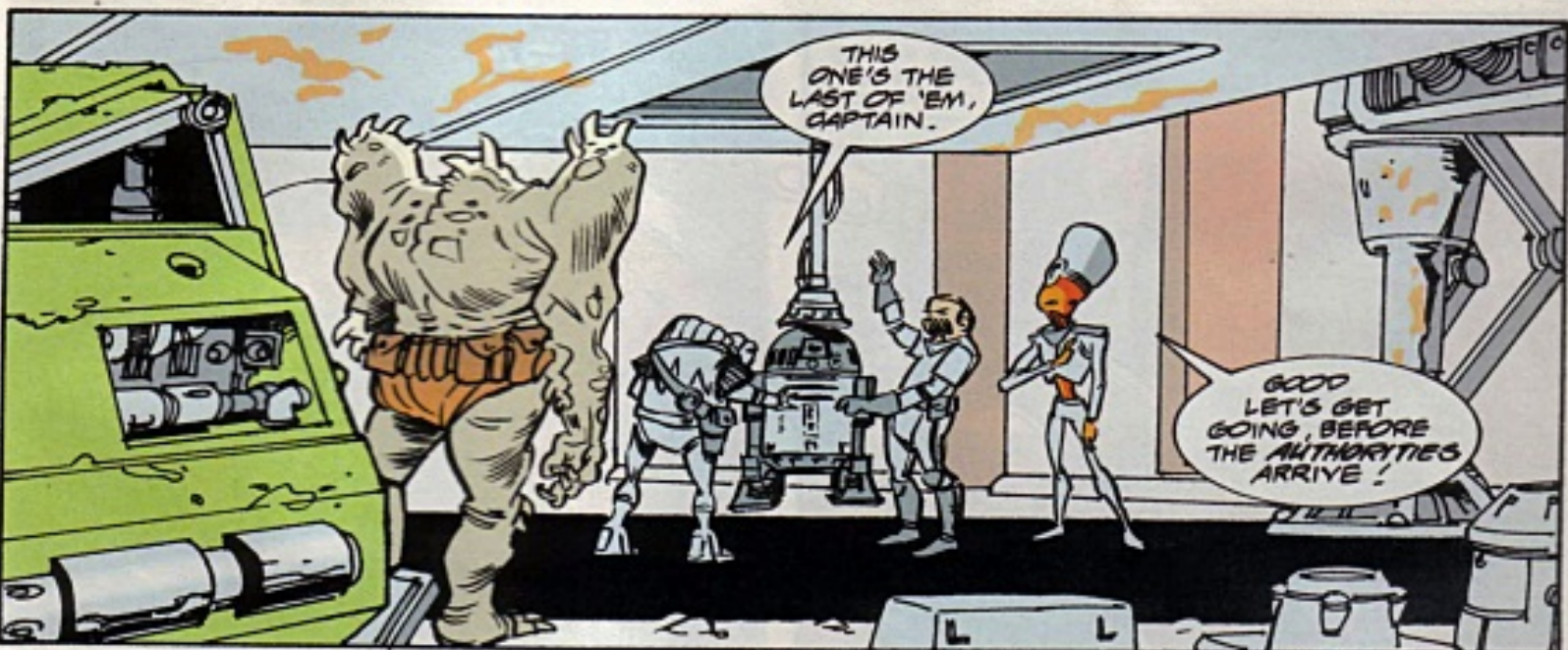
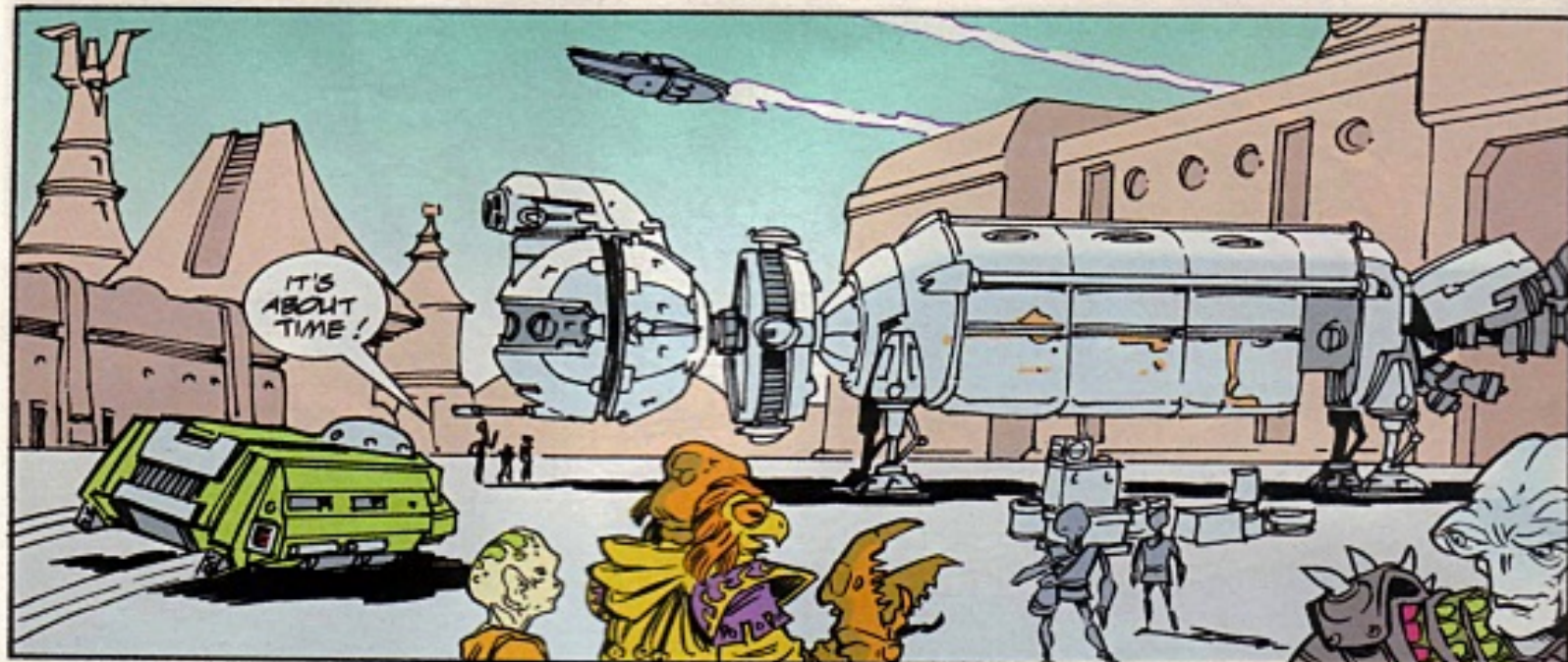
KEEP AN
EYE ON THE
LANDSPEEDER,
ARTOO.

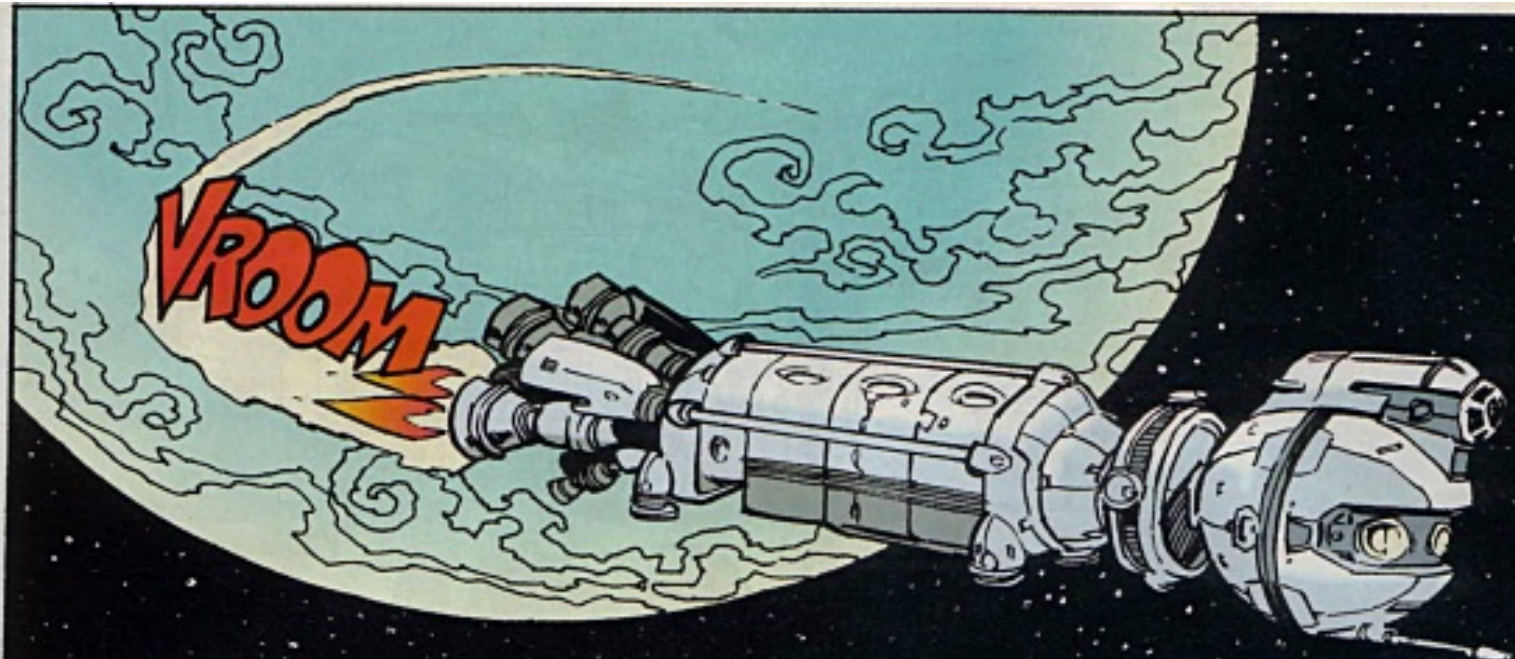
BRR-
BEEB-
BEP!

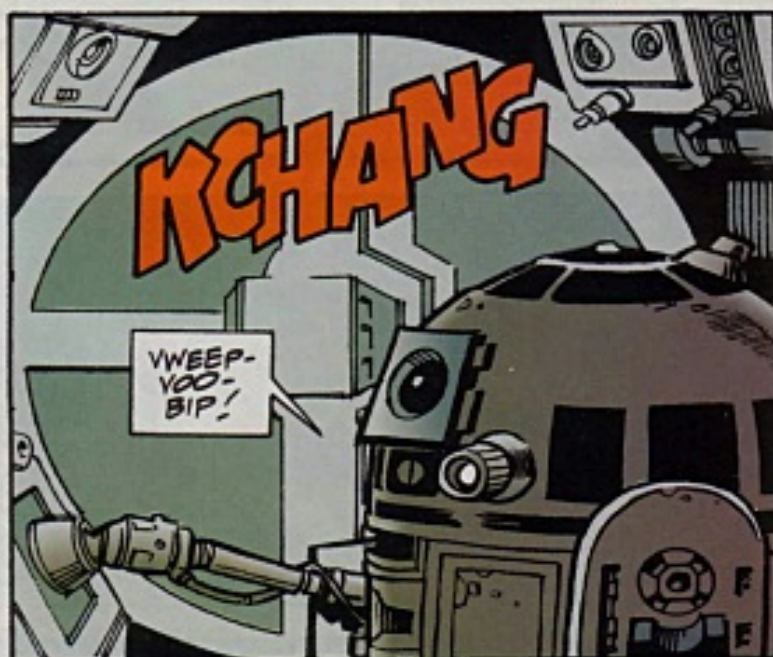
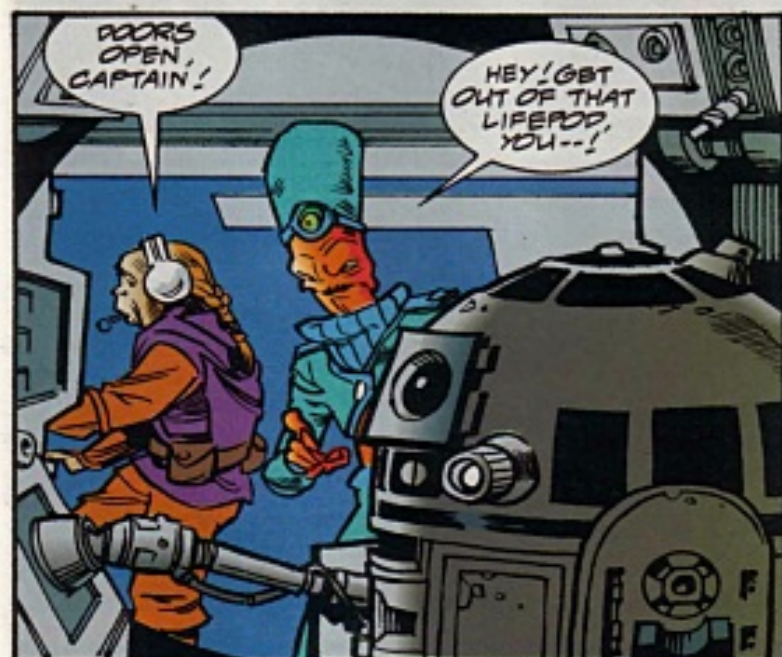
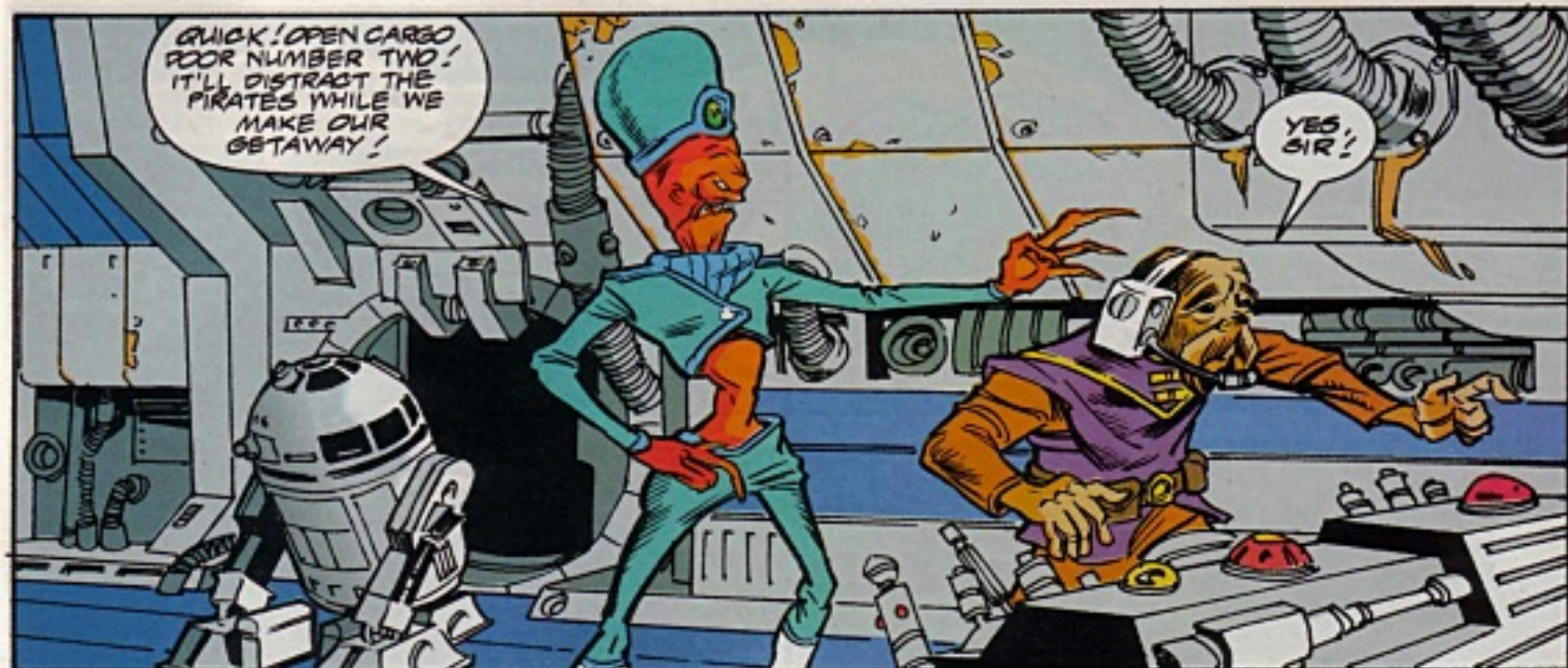
Story by RYDER WINDHAM
Art by BILL HUGHES
Lettering by STEVE DUTRO
Coloring by LEA HERNANDEZ
Editing by PEET JANES

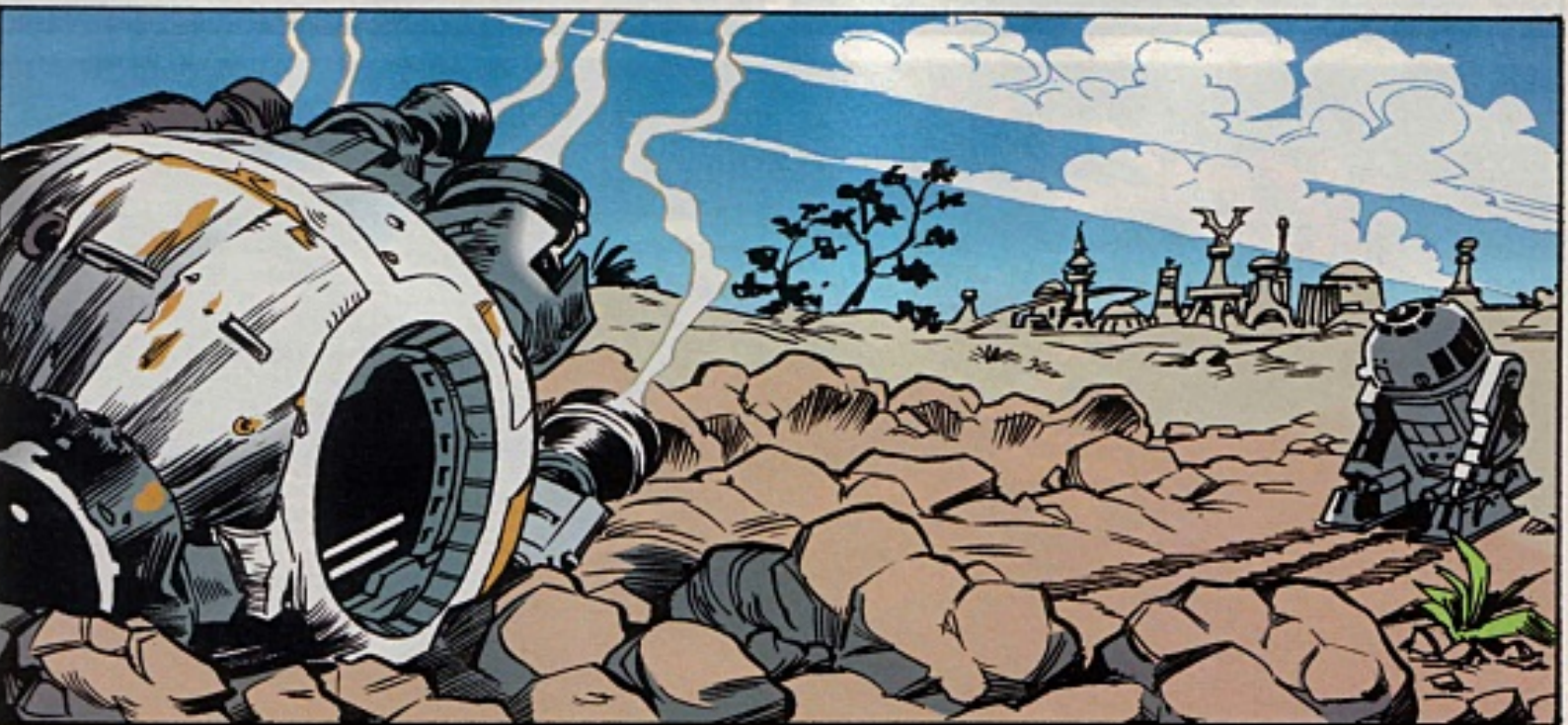
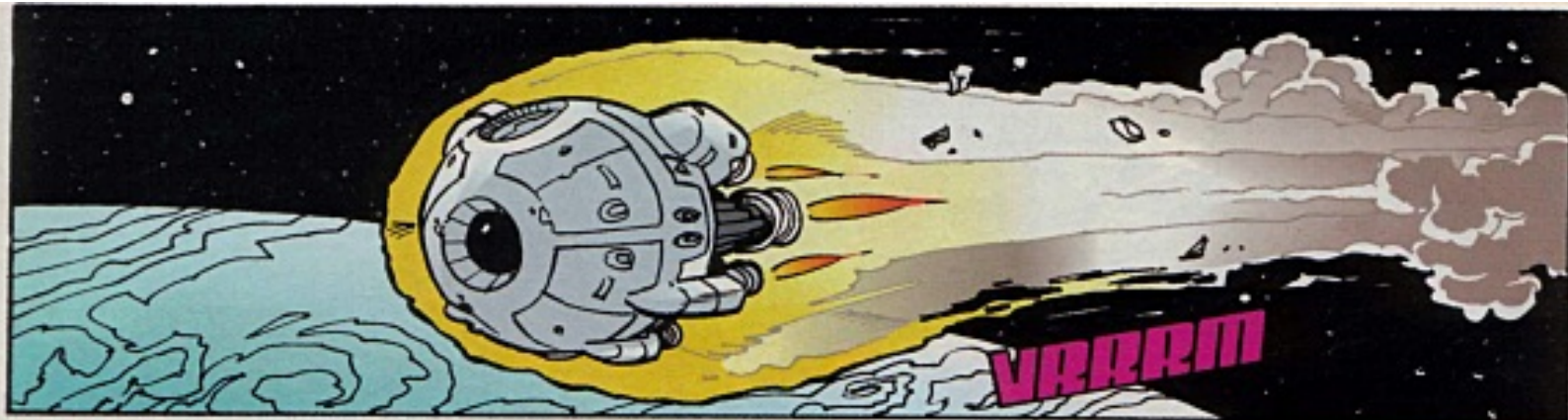


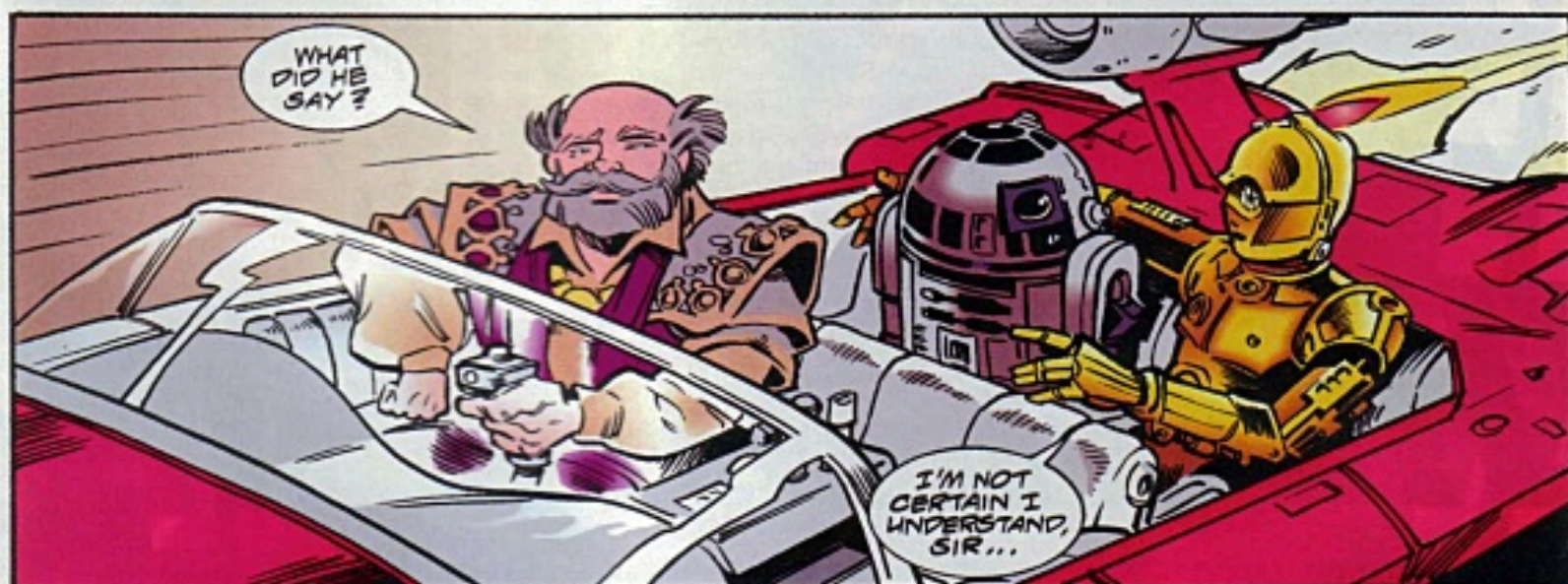
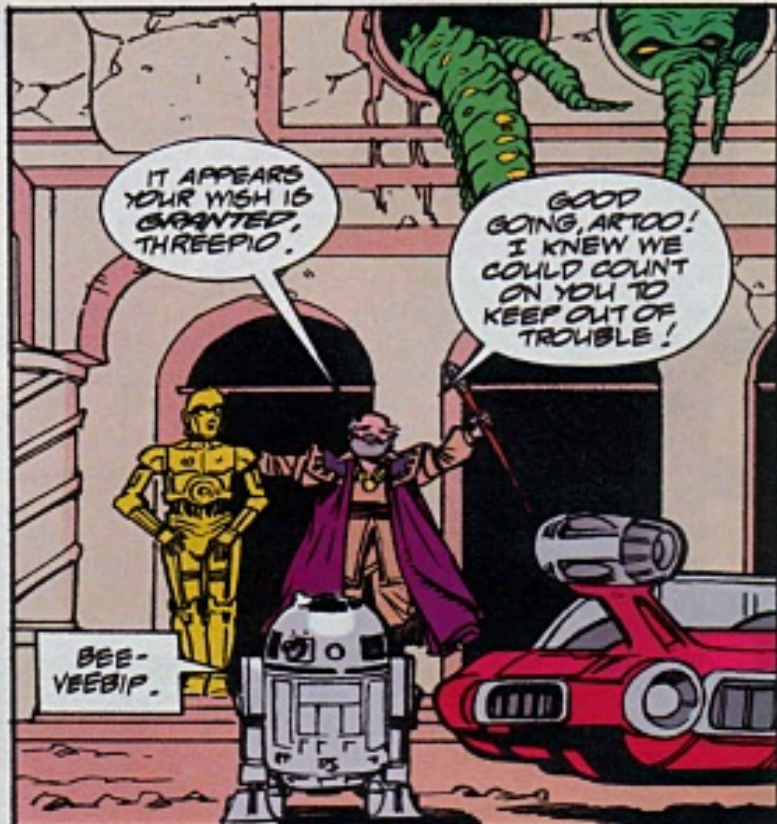












III ➔ With the 20th anniversary of *STAR WARS* approaching, it's possible to consider the 1977 blockbuster one of the most influential movies ever made. There are the obvious trappings of success: two resulting sequels rounding out a mythic trilogy; billions of dollars in global box-office and merchandising generated by ensuing celebrations of the *STAR WARS* universe; and the film's selection in 1989 as one of the first 25 American movies deemed worthy of preservation by an act of Congress. But, more importantly, *STAR WARS* changed movie-making forever by revitalizing the dying art of motion picture visual effects production—and in the process creating an entire industry specializing in the creation of FX magic.

In the glow of success that illuminates all matters *STAR WARS*, it's easy to forget that the original film required such complex effects, it was considered an im-

possible dream in Hollywood and was rejected by many studios before 20th Century Fox took a gamble. Director George Lucas' vision of "a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away" included not only creating a universe full of spinning planets, but staging warp-speeding spaceships and complex aerial battles, which Lucas wanted filmed with all the realism of World War I and II fighter plane dogfights. At the time, the technology didn't exist to bring such a vision to life. In fact, the old special effects departments—as well as the creative resources of the experienced artists who flourished in them—had been phased out decades before as part of the wholesale dismantling of the Hollywood studio system.

So in order to make his movie, George Lucas had to assemble his own band of special effects artists—a group that would eventually become renowned as Industrial Light & Magic or ILM. The mission of the creative team was to develop new visual effects technology that would allow the moviemakers to fly and film miniatures as well as produce complex composite effects shots. (A composite shot combines two or more images onto a single piece of film to produce one image.)

The innovation of the first *STAR WARS* that is most familiar to FX fanciers was "motion control," in which track cameras, models and props were programmed to move in specific, repeatable ways. Those assembled elements then could be composited on negative film in an optical printer.

The optical printer was the technology that

AN OPTICAL
PRINTER COM-
BINED MULTI-
PLE IMAGES TO
PRODUCE THE
SPECIAL EF-
FECTS IN *STAR
WARS*.

STAR FX

THE MAGIC-MA

**George Lucas
turned to the
past for help in
creating his
fantastic visions
of the future**

BY MARK COTTA VAZ

composited not only all the *STAR WARS* effects shots, but also an ensuing two decades of FX magic. So it's important to further examine that complex moviemaking tool.

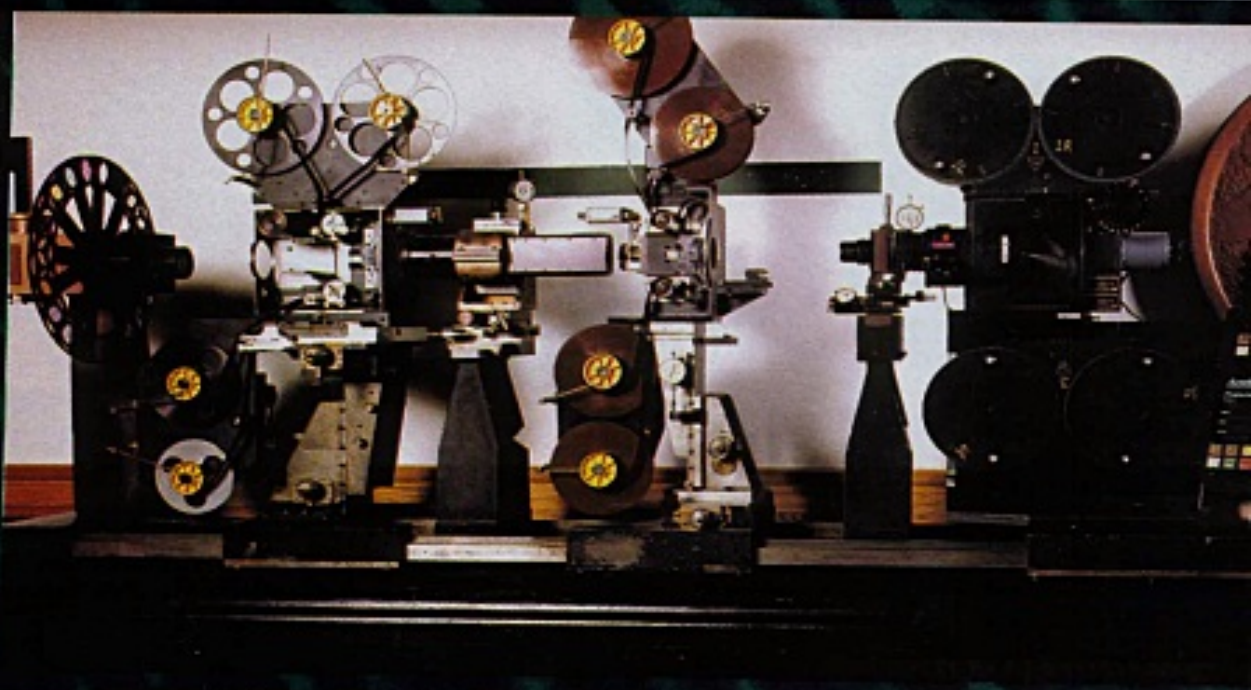
The first optical printer was developed during the 1920s. The basic design consists of one or more projectors and lamphouses facing a recording or "taking" camera loaded with fresh film. The images recorded on exposed film can be separately projected into the eye of the taking camera lens, allowing for different images to be rephotographed and combined on the same film.

The process of optically rephotographing elements requires a number of complex steps: taking the original negative of a specific image; making a copy (called the "interpositive" or "IP"); rephotographing onto negative film; and finally out to a final print. The mechanics of optical compositing



KING MACHINE

THE ANDERSON OPTICAL PRINTER, INVENTED BY FX PIONEER HOWARD ANDERSON, HAS ONCE AGAIN BEEN RETIRED. IT IS NOW ON DISPLAY AT THE CALIFORNIA HEADQUARTERS OF INDUSTRIAL LIGHT & MAGIC, LUCASFILM'S RENOWNED FX FACILITY.



would typically involve combining background and foreground images—such as an X-wing fighter and a planetoid against a starry space scene in the background. To combine the three separate images, “mattes,” which are opaque silhouettes, of the X-wing and the planetoid would keep those film areas unexposed against the starfield until the time for compositing the matte images onto film.

The art of photographic compositing was at the heart of both the challenge, and eventual breakthrough success, of the first *STAR WARS* movie. The visual quality of its effects scenes depended mainly on the choice of a particular film format. With some shots requiring as many as 40 separately filmed images to be composited into one final image, the technology of optical printing had to be taken to new limits. Standard 35-millimeter film would come out grainy and the images wouldn't be sharp following the arduous process of rephotographing and combining the various elements onto negative film. Thankfully Lucas and his effects team, part of the first generation of film-school movie-makers, recalled an abandoned film format that could meet their image quality needs, a process developed during the 1950s.

During the '50s, Hollywood feared losing audiences to the growing popularity of the home TV set. To lure viewers back to the movie theaters, a variety of wide-screen film formats were used to enhance the power of silver-screen images. Paramount Studios developed a process called VistaVision, heralding it as “motion-picture high fidelity.”

The VistaVision process took standard 35-millimeter film, in which each frame had four perforations, or sprocket holes, by which

the film was advanced vertically through the gate of a camera or projection system, and ran it horizontally, doubling the frame's

exposure area to eight perforations. VistaVision's bigger exposure area and sharper final image were used to film several classic movies, notably *White Christmas* (1954), *The Ten Commandments* (1956) and *North by Northwest* (1959).

Unfortunately, movie studios and theaters were reluctant to spend the money required to accommodate VistaVision; it would require replacing standard 35-millimeter, four-perf cameras, optical printers and theater projection systems.

So the format was abandoned. VistaVision cameras and optical printers were either discarded, put in storage or disassembled and the machined parts cannibalized to build new equipment.

The experiment in wide-screen image-making had faded into obscurity when Lucas and his effects team recalled the promise of VistaVision. With the double-frame exposure area afforded by the process, they would be able to create their



VISTAVISION WAS USED TO CREATE THE MIRACULOUS FX IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND NORTH BY NORTHWEST.



complex optical composites without suffering the significant image degradation inevitable with standard film.

Those first ILMers were able to track down and buy for a song the old, abandoned industrial tools of VistaVision. One piece of equipment, the Anderson Optical Printer (named for its inventor, Howard Anderson), which had composited the miraculous effects scenes in *The Ten Commandments*, was purchased from Paramount for an estimated \$11,000 (two decades later the market value of that equipment would be \$300,000).

The resurrected VistaVision technology was used to produce all the *STAR WARS* effects shots; the final VistaVision work printed back out to standard 35-millimeter,

four-perf film and cut in with the rest of the movie. The process also became the film format standard for all effects work. With the success of *STAR WARS*, ILM machinists and optical technicians began to build a new generation of VistaVision cameras and printers.

Today a new technological age of digital image processing and computer graphics flourishes at ILM. VistaVision cameras are still used (although digital cameras are on the way), but the art of optical compositing has been almost completely replaced by digital compositing. The old VistaVision printers have once again been put in storage, sold off or cannibalized for parts.

The transition from the traditional photochemical process to digital is as traumatic a shift for the movie industry as the conversion from silent to sound in the 1920s. And on the horizon can be seen the end of film itself, with the celluloid medium that has recorded moving images for a century replaced by digital processes.

The venerable Anderson Printer, its ILM history stretching from *STAR WARS* in 1977 to *Death Becomes Her* in 1992, was still in perfect working order when it was decommissioned in 1993. It is now on display at ILM's Marin County facility, with a framed poster from *The Ten Commandments* on an adjacent wall and watched over by an Egyptian sarcophagus (a prop from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*). The printer stands as a relic of the moviemaking industry, a big cog in the now obsolete filming process that made possible the visions of *STAR WARS* and two decades of movie magic. ☺

Mark Vaz, a senior writer for Cinefex, is the author of *From Star Wars to Indiana Jones: The Best of the Lucasfilm Archives*, coming from Chronicle Books in December.

STAR WARS

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DELUXE

STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE

COLLECTORS' EDITION

Available exclusively at local comics specialty shops everywhere. Check the Yellow Pages for locations in your area.

Drinking with Chewbacca,

FANS WHO
HUNGER FOR
AFFORDABLE
COLLECTIBLES...

Long before *STAR WARS* lit up the screen, back in the days when George Lucas was struggling to come up with a script that worked, the first glimmer of what would become a worldwide merchandising bonanza crossed the mind of the writer-director-producer.

"I wasn't thinking about merchandising at that point," Lucas recalls. For long hours each day, in a small office

about when you're sitting there writing all day long," Lucas adds. "I think that's because my dog, Indiana, was sort of a prototype for the Wookiee, and you're always seeing these mugs of your favorite dog. It was just something that I wanted to have personally on my desk while I was writing rather than an idea that I could take these out and sell them and make a lot of money."

Lucas had another, similar thought, this one spurred by production artist Ralph McQuarrie's concept of R2-D2. "The design made it look like a cookie jar. I thought, Wouldn't it be fun if you could lift his top off and there'd be cookies?"

So it's little surprise that, nearly 20 years later, when asked what some of his favorite *STAR WARS* products are, Lucas replies, "Well, obviously I like the Wookiee mug and the R2-D2 cookie jar, because those are things that I wanted for myself."

Lucas is not alone. Amid the toys, posters and bedclothes, ceramics figures from the trilogy stand out for their design, quality—and even usefulness. They are still fairly reasonably priced, making it possible for a collector to amass a complete set of *STAR WARS* ceramic figures without spending a fortune.

The first licensed ceramic pieces were three heroically sculpted tankards by artist Jim Rumph for California Originals. There are three tankards in the line: Darth Vader, Obi-Wan Kenobi and—of course—Chewbacca.

These most definitely are not just mugs. Chewie and Kenobi are 6 3/4" tall and hold 36 fluid ounces. Vader is 7 1/4" tall and about as wide from the tips at the front of his mask to the back of his helmet. He holds a whopping 52 ounces of your favorite beverage. Each tankard is true to character and beautifully sculpted.

Vader is glossy black. Kenobi is a flat, desert brown with painted white hair and baby-blue eyes; the top rim and inside of the tankard are deep blue. On the back are the sculpted words, "May the Force

north of San Francisco, Lucas toiled over legal notepads, pouring forth his vision of a space fantasy. "I was sitting there all day, writing and drinking coffee—writing about Wookiees and such, and I thought, Wouldn't it

be fun to have a Wookiee mug?" It was just a stray thought, "the kind of thing you think



GALACTIC BAZAAR

Snacking with R2

Ceramic figurines of Star Wars characters are delectable collectibles BY STEVE SANSWEET

be with you." Chewbacca has the same basic color scheme as Kenobi, with a black nose, white eyes and two teeth painted white. The back of this tankard has the *STAR WARS* logo and "Chewie."

The tankards sold originally in late 1977 and early 1978 for around \$16 each. Today, *Tomart's Price Guide to Worldwide STAR WARS Collectibles* lists their value at between \$55 and \$95. The upper end would be a tankard in perfect condition and still in its heavy white cardboard shipping box featuring *STAR WARS* logos, a full-color tip-on label with a photo of all three tankards and a checked box to show which one is in the carton.

A fourth tankard made it as far as the prototype stage. It was an equally large R2-D2 with a hinged ceramic dome, just like a German beer stein. Alas, R2 was not meant to be. I've heard three different explanations: Sales of the first three didn't meet expectations; there was too much breakage with the design; Lucasfilm was worried about the dome falling on tiny tots' tiny digits.

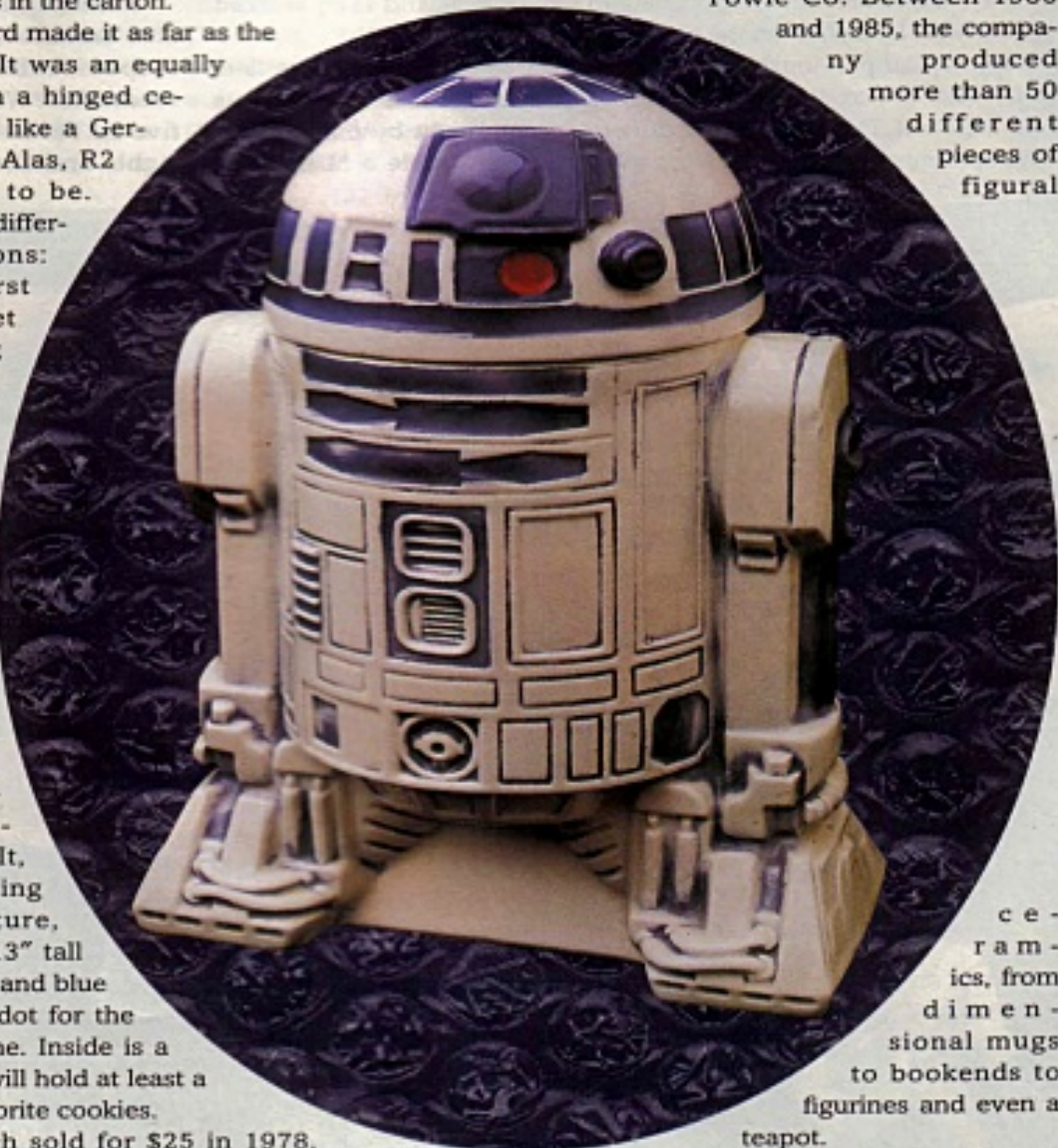
George Lucas' other fantasy-come-true, the R2-D2 cookie jar, was made by Roman Ceramics of Mayfield, Kentucky. It, too, is an imposing piece of sculpture, standing nearly 13" tall in a glossy, white and blue glaze with a red dot for the light on R2's dome. Inside is a plastic liner that will hold at least a dozen of your favorite cookies.

The jar, which sold for \$25 in 1978, comes in a white cardboard box with blue printing and a high-contrast photo of the jar. Roman followed up with a gold-metallic glaze C-3PO cookie jar that stands 10 3/4" high and is 10" between elbow tips. There were fewer 3PO jars made, but R2 still commands a premium in the collectors' market, selling for \$95 to \$175 compared to 3PO's \$65 to \$125.

Roman Ceramics also made three banks: R2-D2, C-3PO and Darth Vader. Depending on condition and whether they come in the original box, the Tomart guide prices them from \$30-\$90,

with the R2-D2 being the most common and least costly and the Vader at the higher end of the scale.

By far the most extensive line of *STAR WARS* trilogy ceramics sold in the U.S. came from a company called Sigma the Tastesetter, later a unit of Towle Co. Between 1980 and 1985, the company produced more than 50 different pieces of figural



...WILL EAT UP THE MANY *STAR WARS* CERAMIC FIGURES.

ceramics, from dimensional mugs to bookends to figurines and even a teapot.

That was a line a collector could love; unfortunately not enough of them did at the time. Much of the sculpting and the manufacturing of the line—at least at the beginning—took place in the area around Nagoya, Japan, which is famed for its ceramic artisans. These

weren't some cheaply produced Far East pieces of junk. The sculpting even on the mugs is detailed, the painting meticulous. Therefore, the original prices were relatively high. The mugs, for example, sold in specialty shops for around \$10 each, compared to \$2.50-\$5 for most mugs.

For *The Empire Strikes Back*, the mugs included Luke, Leia, Han, Darth Vader, Chewbacca, C-3PO and Yoda. Later mugs included Lando, a Gamorrean guard, Klaatu, a biker scout, Wicket and a stormtrooper. Tomart lists the mugs at \$25-\$40 each. *Return of the Jedi* mugs come in color photo boxes; the earlier mugs—as well as most of the other pieces—came in plain white corrugated boxes.

"My sons were five and seven years old at the time, and they were fixated on *STAR WARS*," says Harmon Stein, who was then Sigma's sales marketing manager. "We were trying to bring ceramic giftware to another level: better, exciting, more detailed." And because Marc and Stuart Stein were fans, Sigma negotiated a deal and then worked closely with Lucasfilm on the line's design.

Sigma had previously been very successful with a Muppets line. But Paul Durette, then president of Sigma, notes that the Muppets had constant TV exposure, and items were bought by parents and grandparents who thought they were cute. But while a Miss Piggy

mug flew off the shelves (about 300,000 were sold), most of the *STAR WARS* mugs sold only 20,000-50,000 units each, Durette says. The Yoda mug was the champ, with more than 100,000 sold.

"Retailers bought a lot at first, so we went back and produced more, but they didn't move off the shelves quickly, so we ended up closing out a lot of the merchandise," Durette says. Some of the mugs ended up at bargain stores for less than \$2.

Perhaps the most unusual—and rarest—Sigma item is a teapot featuring Luke on a tauntaun. "We worked on that five to seven months to get it right, and then nobody knew



SIGMA PRODUCED THE MOST EXTENSIVE LINE OF *STAR WARS* COLLECTIBLE CERAMICS. CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT: MUG FEATURING A GAMORREAN GUARD; MUG OF KLAATU, ONE OF JABBA'S NIKTO SKIFF GUARDS; DIMENSIONAL PICTURE FRAME FEATURING 3PO; WICKET AND KNEESAA MUSIC BOX; FIGURINE OF EMPEROR PALPATINE ON THRONE; FIGURINES OF BOBA FETT, LANDO CALRISSIAN AND WICKET THE EWOK. THESE AND OTHER *STAR WARS* CERAMICS ARE NOW QUITE AFFORDABLE PIECES OF MEMORABILIA.

what it was," Stein says. At up to \$60 new, the teapot was also the most expensive item in the line. Today it is valued at up to \$150 in the Tomart price guide, and there seems to be lots of room for growth in value because only a few thousand were produced.

Since Sigma sold mostly to housewares and department stores, Stein says other rare (and somewhat strange) items are the C-3PO cellophane tape dispenser (\$40-\$60) and the R2-D2 scissors holder and string dispenser (\$50-\$60), which were designed to be sold in stationery stores. The *Empire* line also included dramatically sculpted bookends with Vader and Chewbacca (\$50-\$75); a hexagonal cookie jar with Vader

on one side and the droids on the other (\$60-\$125); dimensional photo frames of Vader (which also came in a mirror version); C-3PO; and a dramatically sculpted R2-D2 (each \$25-\$50).

At least one dealer has set a price in the \$400-dollar range for an R2-D2 and R5-D4 salt and pepper shaker set (Tomart: \$65-\$150); there's also a double Yoda set (\$35-\$45). Yoda also appears as a 9" vase (\$35-\$50),

a tumbler/pencil cup (\$25-\$45), a bank (\$25-\$45), a candlestick (\$25-\$50), and a covered backpack box \$20-\$40). "Utilitarian" items include a snowspeeder toothbrush holder (\$25-\$50) and a landspeeder soap dish (\$25-\$45).

All three music boxes are fairly rare. They are the turret with C-3PO (\$55-\$115); Sy Snootles and the Max Rebo Band (\$50-\$100); and Wicket and Kneesaa (\$45-\$80). A C-3PO pencil tray (\$25-\$45), Chewbacca bank (\$25-\$45), stormtrooper cup/box (\$20-\$40); four decal mugs (\$5-\$12) with a matching vinyl placemat set (\$10-\$20); and a three-piece china set for children (\$25-\$45), round out the *Empire Strikes Back* line.

Besides new mugs and a Jabba the Hutt bank (\$25-\$45), the *Jedi* line consists of 12 small figurines in a mostly satin finish and with decidedly young-looking faces. They include Han, Luke, Leia, the droids, Vader, Klaatu, Bibb Fortuna, Gamorrean guard, Wicket, Lando, Boba Fett and the Emperor in his throne. Most now sell for \$20-\$40, with the Emperor a bit higher.

By the way, neither of the former Sigma executives has a full set of their own ceramic *STAR WARS* wares. "I should have kept one of everything," Durette sighs. "I only have the mugs," Stein moans. And that, fellow collectors, is one reason why there's a booming market for *STAR WARS* collectibles today. "Who knew?" ☺

Steve Sansweet is a Los Angeles writer, editor and *STAR WARS* collector. He is the co-author of Tomart's Price Guide to Worldwide *STAR WARS* Collectibles and wrote *STAR WARS: From Concept to Screen to Collectible*.



AMONG THE MOST UNUSUAL - AND RAREST - ITEMS FROM SIGMA IS THE LUKE ON TAUNTAUN TEAPOT.



Matt Smylie just played the *TIE Fighter* video game and has a question. Joe MacKay likes to talk to his pal, Alec Usticke, about *Return of the Jedi* trivia. Mario Jesmanowicz wants to know when he can get his hands on the new *Dark Empire II* comic book. Where are all these *STAR WARS* fans meeting? Cyberspace, or more accurately, the Internet.

It's no secret that the Internet, the information superhighway, cyberspace and on-line services are buzzwords of the '90s. Literally millions of ordinary folks quipped with a personal computer and a modem, are dialing into an international web filled with news, information, software, games and bulletin boards (where users can post messages or chat live). The Net, as it's called, isn't just one place, but a crossroads where hundreds of computer networks intersect. It used to be the domain of academia and government types, but the proliferation of home computers has wired the Net into every level of society.

BY KEVIN FITZPATRICK (k72ndSt@aol.com.)

All the consumer subscription on-line services—America Online, CompuServe, Delphi, GENie and Prodigy—have bulletin boards dedicated to various lifestyle pursuits, from juggling to home breweries. Nestled in there firmly is *STAR WARS* fandom.

"Because the Internet has worldwide access, you can have any number of opinions come back to you, on what might have seemed to be a limited area," says Daniel Thiel, 21, a computer engineering student at North Dakota State University. (Dan and others were interviewed, by the way, via the Net.) "The *STAR WARS* movies themselves covered many areas of thinking—such as good vs. evil or technology vs. man—which lead to many different views. On-line services are a good way to explore them."

"The Net opens up the world a lot more," says Cindy Yan, 28, an executive secretary in Monterey Park, Calif., and a fan interested in the casting of the next *STAR WARS* film. "Each of its newsgroups form a community, based on a particular interest. It doesn't matter if I'm in California and someone else is in Texas, New York or even another country. With the Net, geographical distance makes no difference. Without the Net, none of these discussions would be possible."

Using their computers, at home, school or work, fans gain access to all sorts of *STAR WARS* information. New licensed products—books, games, collectibles, trading cards—are of particular interest. Trivia and personal opinions and theories about the first three films are always popular, too.



Rê: A GālăxY of Users

Martin Thurn, 29, might spend most of his time working on his doctorate degree at Ohio State University, but he spends a lot of his spare time collecting all types of *STAR WARS* toys. The Internet immensely helps him out, he says.

"I am constantly acquiring knowledge about *STAR WARS* collectibles, usually in little bits and pieces, from users who have information or who have the collectibles themselves to describe to me," Martin said. "I definitely read reviews about new products on-line. I would post reviews—if I ever bought new *STAR WARS* items soon enough!"

Joe MacKay, 24, is a Navy ensign training to be a fighter pilot. After long hours cracking the books and studying aviation, he logs onto America Online (AOL) and its *STAR WARS* discussion areas.

"I keep coming back for more because *STAR*

WARS is special to me," says Joe. "I find the messages inside the story fascinating, and they drive me to be the best I can be. I saw *STAR WARS*, and I wanted to fly [like] my heroes Luke and Han. Now, 17 years later, I am fulfilling my dream. I knew I couldn't fly an X-wing, so I looked for the next best thing."

While Joe is sending e-mail to his on-line comrade Alec Usticke (screen name: Uncle Owen), Alec is sorting the results from the weekly trivia contests he runs on AOL. Vice president of the AOL *STAR WARS* Fan Club, the 24-year-old data conversion manager is recruiting new members. There are more than 300 now, he says.

"On-line services bring together people with common interests from all over North America and the world," Alec says. "I would never know so many *STAR WARS* fans without AOL. Whenever a new book or any other product comes out, people are quick to post their opinions. I'm no exception. A lively debate usually ensues on the strengths and weaknesses of the item."

Rê: LOVING The MOVIES

Of course, none of this on-line chatter would exist if not for George Lucas' amazing trilogy of *STAR WARS* films, still delighting us in 1994. Fans use the Net to explore the movies. Whether it's to debate a line of dialogue from *The Empire Strikes Back* or comment on Harrison Ford's facial expressions, fans on-line have the time, energy and en-

"Because the Internet has worldwide access, you can have any number of possible opinions come back to you, on what might have seemed to be a limited area," — DANIEL THIEL



ILLUSTRATION BY NORM DWYER

thusiasm to post seemingly endless streams of messages about the trilogy. When newspapers picked up on early casting favorites for the new film, e-mail flashed from screen to screen about the relative merits of today's actors and actresses. For fans hungry to talk about the movies new and old, the Net is always buzzing.

University of Wisconsin sophomore Mario Jesmanowicz considers the Internet his "big answer" in furthering his devotion to *STAR WARS*. "I love *STAR WARS* because it was the first movie to ever amaze me," Mario says. "I left the theater speechless and I could not wait for more *STAR WARS* movies. Unfortunately, none of my friends love it as I do, and that is why I go to the Internet. I've always had a lot of questions about the *STAR WARS* universe, and the friends I've made there answer them for me."

Rê: BOOKS, CARDS & COMICS

For *STAR WARS* enthusiasts who follow the adventures in the Ballantine books and Dark Horse comics, going on-line gives them a chance to do many things. They can review the latest releases, seek out trades for issues they're missing or exchange ideas about plots. Ballantine Books releases whole chapter previews on-line. Topps editors read e-mail reviews of its *STAR WARS* Galaxy cards.

"Author Kevin J. Anderson has been kind enough to let information about his upcoming projects seep into the Internet," says Ryan D. King, 25, a linguist working in Idaho Falls, Idaho. "The *STAR WARS* newsgroup was the first place I heard about the *Dark Empire* audio adaptation, Vonda McIntyre's new novel, *The Crystal Star*, and other books, comics and upcoming projects. I always look for that kind of information on the Net."

Rê: LICENSED PRODUCTS

Tammy Lynn Olsen, 19, a communications major at Hesser College in Manchester, NH, says she is on-line mainly to talk to friends with similar interests, and to read reviews about the new *STAR WARS* products being released. "Some I would not have known about, like the figures or the *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE*, if I wasn't online. I talk about the new releases with my new on-line friends. We talk about our likes and dislikes with the new books, cards and figures."

"I am constantly acquiring knowledge about STAR WARS collectibles, usually in little bits and pieces, from users who have the knowledge..." — MARTIN THURN

"I received a list on-line of the new Kenner *STAR WARS* figures that I knew nothing about," Tammy adds. "I also got the release dates. As a collector, this is great information for me to have."

Rê: Why Stār Wārs?

Why does the Net attract such devoted *STAR WARS* fans? Why are there more than 3,000 messages posted monthly to some *STAR WARS* bulletin boards?

"As virtually a lifelong *STAR WARS* fan, I think it's both appropriate and ironic that fans should end up here on the Net," says Malin Huffman, 19, a junior music major at Wichita State University. "One of the endearing things about the movies is the way the characters all take technology pretty much for granted, so you get a character-driven story in a fantastic setting. I think those of us who have been inspired by that vision share the ultimate goal of raising our world to that kind of fantastic level of technology and power. The Internet is a natural meeting place for people who are willing to take the next step."

Rê: Not Just Fāns Onliñē

The folks connected with the myriad *STAR WARS* products see the benefits on the Net, too. Lucy Autrey Wilson, Lucasfilm's Director of Publishing, says the opportunities presented by the Net haven't gone unnoticed at Skywalker Ranch, and that Lucasfilm is working with licensees that want to tap this market.

"We and Topps are mutually very interested in working to make the *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE* an interactive magazine," she says. "It could be some kind of live question-and-answer forum for fans. It's something we're actively looking into."

Andy Eddy, senior editor at *GamePro* magazine and author of seven books on video game strategy, as well as *Internet Afterhours* (Prima Publishing), spends a lot of his work time on-line.

"If I'm stuck at a point in a game, like on something that is not in my notes or in a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions), I'll go on-line."

"I love STAR WARS because it was the first movie to ever amaze me... Unfortunately, none of my friends love it as I do, and that is why I go to the Internet." — MARIO JESMANOWICZ

C Y B E R * N O T E S

Andy says. "If someone has a tip or I need one, I'll look there. I also answer questions by e-mail, and stay in touch with people who may be across town, or in Finland."

Ellen Key Harris is a science fiction/fantasy editor at Del Rey Books in New York, and a big promoter of editors using the Net to reach read-

Re: Getting Hooked Up

So you want to join the thousands of fans who meet on-line? Here are some places to start. You will need a modem to hook your computer to the Net. If you don't have free access at your school or job, you will have to shell out a few bucks for subscription fees.

Commercial subscription networks charge a flat monthly membership fee. You also pay for the local phone charge to hook up. Contact each of the services for complete details:

- ◆ America Online—1-800-827-6364
- ◆ CompuServe—1-800-524-3388 (ask for representative 167, and mention Topps, which is found in the Comics Publishers Forum at GO TOPPS)
- ◆ DELPHI—1-800-695-4005 (or send e-mail to INFO@delphi.com)
- ◆ GENIE—1-800-638-9636

ON-LINE BULLETIN BOARDS

Each of the above on-line services has bulletin boards with messages, newsgroups and live "chat" areas for *STAR WARS* fans. Check the directory of each service, usually in the science fiction or movies areas. Other places to check are in the comic books, collectibles and fantasy bulletin boards.

USENET NEWSGROUPS

These are the Internet groups, and are to be added to your host of personal newsgroups. The most popular is rec.arts.sf.starwars. This is for discussions of all things in the *STAR WARS* universe. Between 125 and 175 new messages are added each day. Other newsgroups that may interest fans include:

- rec.arts.sf.announce—Major announcements in the science fiction world;
- rec.arts.sf.fandom—Discussions of SF fan activities;
- rec.arts.sf.marketplace—Personal for-sale notices of SF materials;
- rec.arts.sf.misc—Science fiction lovers' newsgroup;
- rec.arts.sf.movies—Discussing SF motion pictures;
- rec.arts.sf.reviews—Reviews of sci-fi, fantasy, horror stuff;
- rec.arts.sf.science—Real and speculative aspects of sci-fi science;
- rec.arts.sf.tv—Sci-fi on TV;
- rec.arts.sf.written—Discussion of written SF and fantasy.

"As virtually a lifelong STAR WARS fan, I think it's both appropriate and ironic that fans should end up here on the Net... The Internet is a natural meeting place for people who are willing to take the next step." — MALIN HUFFMAN

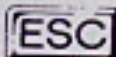
ers. Harris says she spends about 10 hours a week on the Net and off-line preparing material for the *Del Rey Internet Newsletter* (DRIN), a monthly publication chock full of information about books, authors and release dates.

"We promote many of our books on-line, and *STAR WARS* is a major part of it," Harris says. "Obviously, it gives us more promotional capability, but the beauty of the Internet is that it's so focused. We can go right to where the *STAR WARS* fans are, and see what they want to read. The Net is the only way to do it from your desk, to see what they like and don't like."

Del Rey releases sample chapters of new books on-line, which users can download and read for free. "That way you can read the first chapter and can see if you want to buy the book," says Harris.

You can access Del Rey samples a few different ways: They're on the Panix gopher (gopher.panix.com) in the Del Rey Books directory; or request them via e-mail from the Del Rey filesaver (delrey@tachyon.com; SENDME sample.starwars); or they're available in CompuServe's SF Library 4 and GENIE's SFRT fiction library. For a list of all sample *STAR WARS* chapters available via the filesaver, send a message to delrey@tachyon.com with "LIST sample" as the body of the message. ☺

Kevin Fitzpatrick is a freelance writer in New York City.



Calling Trivia Fans

Answer these questions and enter to win one of 25
out-of-this-world *STAR WARS* prizes!

Okay, so you've seen all three *STAR WARS* movie umpteen times, you've read all the books and the comics, you're even wearing a Yoda watch! Now it's time to test that accumulated knowledge by trying to answer these 14 tricky trivia questions. Then unscramble the first let-

USE THE FORCE

ter in each answer to come up with the Bonus Answer. Mail us the correct answers and we'll enter you in a random drawing. May the Force be with you!

25 PRIZE WINNERS!

1 GRAND PRIZE Limited-edition, signed lithograph of Ken Steacy's Darth Vader art (see page 15), from Gifted Images Publishing Ltd.

2 FIRST PRIZES Boba Fett 1/4-scale vinyl model kit (see page 6), from Screamin' Products

3 SECOND PRIZES Uncut sheet of *STAR WARS* Widevision cards (see page 7), from Topps

19 THIRD PRIZES Retail box (36 packs) of *STAR WARS* Galaxy Series 2 cards, from Topps

Entries must be received by **January 31, 1995**. One entry per person. Answers will be given in Issue #3; winners will be notified by mail. Photocopies or hand-written copies of this contest are acceptable.

Name _____ Birth Date _____

Address _____ Apt.# _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

MAIL YOUR ENTRY TO:

Contest #1, *STAR WARS GALAXY MAGAZINE*,
One Whitehall St., New York, NY 10004

- 1) This small, single-pilot type of spacecraft has double-layered wings that can split open when attacking.
- 2) One of this astromech droid's most important missions was to find Obi-Wan Kenobi.
- 3) The comm-unit designation for Luke's snowspeeder during the Battle of Hoth.
- 4) This planet was the birthplace of Bail Organa.
- 5) He led the Alliance's battle group on the assault against the second Death Star during the Battle of Endor.
- 6) An omnivorous, multitentacled beast that lives at the bottom of a deep sand pit in Tatooine's Dune Sea.
- 7) The lead singer in Max Rebo's jizz-wailing band of musicians.
- 8) On Cloud City, this cyborg was Lando Calrissian's assistant.
- 9) These strange-looking, furry creatures, with wide mouths full of sharp teeth, inhabit the forest floor of Endor's moon.
- 10) Furry pack animals that roam the frozen wastes of Hoth.
- 11) Jabba the Hutt used this beast as a source of entertainment—and a way to eliminate his enemies—until Luke eliminated it.
- 12) Han Solo evaded Imperial Star Destroyers chasing the *Millennium Falcon* in this largely deserted star system adjacent to the Hoth system.
- 13) A Rodian bounty hunter hired by Jabba to apprehend Han Solo, he met his demise in Mos Eisley's cantina.
- 14) The abbreviated name for a four-legged combat vehicle used by Imperial ground troops as a transport and assault craft.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

8) _____

9) _____

10) _____

11) _____

12) _____

13) _____

14) _____

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Now, to commemorate the 15th anniversary of this important movie premiere, The Hamilton Collection presents "Star Wars," a stunning, fully authorized commemorative plate. Created by award winning artist Morgan Weistling, "Star Wars" is the premiere issue in the *Star Wars Trilogy Plate Collection*. Highly endorsed by the Star Wars fan club, this breathtaking montage brings to life the intriguing personalities of this classic film.

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BOBA FETT: MYSTERY MAN IN NOT-SO-SHINING ARMOR

The most notorious and fearsome bounty hunter in the galaxy is also the most mysterious. Little is known of the man called Boba Fett. Yet despite his all-too-few appearances in various mediums of the *STAR WARS* galaxy, Boba Fett remains one of the series' most popular characters. Where did

Boba come from? What secrets lie in his past? Who is underneath that mask? Join us now as we unravel the dangers and mysteries of the nefarious Boba Fett.

In *Star Wars*, George Lucas presented one of the nastiest movie villains ever—Darth Vader. In the sequel, Lucas struck lightning again with a bad guy who may be even more deadly, mysterious, and popular, than Vader—Boba Fett. Yet Boba's successful debut was no accident.

The birth of Boba was the collaborative effort of creative teams at Lucasfilm, Kenner Toys and Nelvana, a California animation studio. Lucas designers Ralph McQuarrie and Joe Johnston designed the Fett armor. Originally Boba's heavily armored gear was to be worn by entire squads of supercommandos from the Mandalore system. Later it was decided that Boba Fett would be the only character in the suit, which included wrist lasers, a jet pack and rocket darts. To show off Fett's action-packed past, his colorful armor was then aged and dented.

Boba's first appearance was in the *Star Wars Holiday Special*, a two-hour TV special that aired on CBS at 8 p.m. on December 17, 1978. He appeared in a cartoon that was titled in alien lettering along with the number "3241."

He met most of the *Star Wars* cast then, except Princess Leia. It was revealed not only that Fett was working with Darth Vader, but also that Vader was back in control with the Empire. Boba's Jabba the Hutt connection wasn't mentioned until later.

Kenner Toys, which already had a line of *Star Wars* action figures, immediately welcomed this new villain. In early 1979, Kenner invited fans to send away for a Missile-Firing Boba Fett. Unfortunately, that figure was never released; instead consumers got a version with the missile glued into its backpack. In fall of '79, Kenner released a 13 1/2" figure of Boba as well.

Those "teasers" merely whetted the appetite of fans, who then had to wait eight months before seeing Fett again, this time on the big screen in *The Empire Strikes Back*, which premiered May 21, 1980. Johnston's complex suit designs were built at EMI in London, and shipped back to him in California to be painted. Inside the war-beaten armor was British actor Jeremy Bulloch.

The character's well-conceived mystique paid off. Despite only a few lines in the film, and less than five minutes on screen, Boba Fett was an instant hit.

In *Empire*, Boba piloted a deceptively simple-looking ship, *Slave I*. Nilo Rodis-Jamero designed the eddy-shaped ship based on the knowings of unique streetlamps near the headquarters of Industrial Light & Magic, Lucasfilm's special effects company. Though never referred to by name, and only seen for a few moments, *Slave I* later was



clear until the third film, Fett's future also was fuzzy. Many fans were sure that Fett was the "other" potential Jedi of whom Yoda had spoken. They then were doubly

offered no explanation as to why C-3PO and R2-D2 hadn't recognized Fett in any of their other co-appearances.

Finally, Fett resurfaced in Dark Horse Comics' *Star Wars: Dark Empire* series. In the story, which takes place six years after the events in *Jedi*, Boba admits that he was forced into the life he now leads by the Sarlacc. And while he once again fails to get his bounty—Han Solo and Princess Leia—he roams the galaxy, a free and exceedingly dangerous man.

Will Fett appear in future *Star Wars* films? Is he indeed a Correllian, as some have speculated, and a relative of Han? Or is he just a mysterious and intriguing character who won't see the flickering light of the movie screen again? Stay tuned....

—Andy Mangels
Andy Mangels is a freelance writer based in Portland, Oregon.



WHERE BOBA'S BEEN

♦ *Star Wars Holiday Special* (Aired on CBS, Friday, November 17, 1978); no voice actor listed; directed by Steve Binder

♦ *The Empire Strikes Back* (May 21, 1980); portrayed by actor Jeremy Bulloch

♦ *The Empire Strikes Back* National Public Radio series, episodes #7-9 (1983); voice-over by Alan Rosenberg

♦ *Star Wars* comic strip (*Los Angeles Times* Syndicate, June 17-August 9, 1980); "The Frozen World of Ota," written by Don Christensen, will be reprinted in part in *Classic Star Wars: The Daily Adventure* #9 comic book, coming from Dark Horse in 1995

♦ *Return of the Jedi* (May 25, 1983); again portrayed by Jeremy Bulloch

♦ *Star Wars* #8 comic book (Marvel, March 1984); "Jaws of Doom," written by Jo Duffy

♦ *Star Wars* cartoon series #4 (Nelvana, Fall 1985); "A Race to the Finish," written by Peter Sander and Steven Wright; voice-over by George Buza

♦ *Star Wars* *Galaxy Guide 5: Return of the Jedi* (West End Games, 1989); "Dark Voyage to Tatooine," written by Michael Stern

♦ *Dark Empire* #3 (Dark Horse, February 1991); "The Battle for Clamart," written by Tom Veitch

♦ *Dark Empire* #4 (Dark Horse, April 1991); "Confrontation on the Smuggler's Moon," written by Tom Veitch

♦ *Dark Empire Sourcebook* (West End Games, 1991); "The Onset of Boba Fett," written by Michael A. Horne

A FIELD GUIDE TO BOBA FETT'S MANDALORE ARMOR

Boba Fett wears the armor of the Mandalore supercommandos, a group of evil warriors who were defeated by the Jedi Knights during the Clone Wars. Excepting the *Marvel Star Wars* comic strip, it isn't known if Boba was a Mandalorian warrior or not.

His armor includes a helmet that has A) a macrobinocular viewport, B) infrared capabilities, C) motion and sound sensors, D) an internal comlink with *Slave I*, E) a broad-band antenna for intercepting and decoding transmissions and F) an external targeting rangefinder. Wrist gauntlets house G) lasers, H) a miniature flame projector, I) a corded fuel line for flame projector, J) a mini concussion rocket and K) a fibercord whip/grappling device.

Boba's jet pack includes L) main rocket thrusters, M) directional thrusters and N) a turbo-projected magnetic grappling hook with a 20-meter lanyard. The outfit is completed by O) knee-pad rocket dart launchers, spiked heels, P) a concussion grenade launcher, Q) a BlastTech R-1 rifle and R) braided Weekee scalpels over the shoulders. The armor can also seal itself to protect Fett from insufficient or deadly atmospheres. It has a two-hour supply of oxygen.



recreated as toys and model kits.

Shortly after *Empire's* debut, the daily *Star Wars* newspaper comic strip capitalized on Fett's popularity. The strip ran a prequel story that introduced Fett to Han, Chewie and Luke. Yet Luke wasn't aware of Fett's identity.

The story, "The Frozen World of Ota," was written by Don Christensen. It started out featuring Russ Manning art, but he became ill and Rick Hoberg took over the pencils. Hoberg's sketches were first inked by new comer Dave Stevens (before he became famous with another jet pack character, The Rocketeer) and later by Alfredo Alcala.

With the fate of the carbon-frozen Han Solo un-

surprised during the premiere of *Return of the Jedi* on May 25, 1983, when Fett's future seemed to be purely as lunch for the Sarlacc in the deserts of Tatooine.

Thanks to the comics and cartoons, however, Fett survived. *Marvel's Star Wars* #81 revealed that Boba had escaped the Sarlacc, though by the end of the story he had been swallowed by the sand beast yet again. Still, there was hope for Fett fans.

It came in the fourth episode of the animated *Droids* TV series, "A Race to the Finish," told a flashback tale of Boba Fett's first meeting with C-3PO and R2-D2. Some of Fett's operation and hints at a relationship with Jabba the Hutt were revealed. Unfortunately the story

BOBA ILLUSTRATED Here's from whence our poster boy's art and photos came, clockwise from top left: art by Brian Selznick, from Series 1 of Topps *Star Wars* Galaxy cards; scene from Boba's debut, the 1978 *Star Wars Holiday Special*; Boba with Darth Vader, from *The Empire Strikes Back*; art for the *Droids* TV series, from Series 2 of *Star Wars* Galaxy cards, also appeared on packaging for Kenner Toys' Boba action figure; behind-the-scenes shot during filming of Jabba's prisoner barge in *Return of the Jedi*; how artist Daniel Brinerton envisions Boba without his helmet, from Series 2 of *Star Wars* Galaxy cards; Boba with his bounty, Han Solo, from *The Empire Strikes Back*; art by John Bolton, from Series 2 of *Star Wars* Galaxy cards.





BØBA FETT